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Report of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Burundi

Summary

The present report provides an update of the situation in Burundi since the substantive session of the Council in 2005. It highlights positive developments, including the successful holding of elections and the establishment of a duly elected Government and Parliament. While progress has been made on the political and security fronts, the humanitarian situation and development perspectives are of concern. Strong international support is needed to answer basic needs of a still extremely vulnerable population and to ensure the transition from relief to development. In this context, the report calls for further strengthening of the relations of the Government of Burundi with its development partners and for strong support by donors at the conference to be held in September 2006. The report concludes by saying that, in the post-transition phase, the consideration of international assistance to Burundi would be better dealt with by the newly established Peacebuilding Commission.

* E/2006/100.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/33 of 26 July 2005, in which the Council requested the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Burundi to continue to follow closely the humanitarian situation and economic and social conditions, to examine the transition from relief to development in Burundi and the way in which the international community supports the process and to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2006. The Council also decided that the work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group would be reviewed at that session with a view to considering whether to continue its mandate based on the consideration of its report, which should be submitted no later than six weeks before the start of the substantive session of 2006, and on the situation prevailing in Burundi at that time.

2. The present report focuses on developments since the last report of the Group to the Council (E/2005/82), including the status of international donor support to Burundi. Thereafter it presents views on future support to peacebuilding efforts in Burundi.

II. Highlights of the situation in Burundi

3. Since the substantive session of the Council in July 2005, Burundi has moved from being a country in political transition to a country with a duly elected Parliament, Government and President. The electoral process, which covered all levels of local and national elective functions, was successfully conducted from June to September 2005 and a democratically elected Government was installed. Since then, President Nkurunziza and the Government of Burundi have consolidated the authority of the institutions.

4. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group is pleased by the considerable progress made, in line with the electoral calendar originally decided. It considers that these results could not have been achieved without the determination and courage of the people and political leaders of Burundi, and it expresses its deep satisfaction at the positive role played by the international community, particularly the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), in supporting this process.

5. While this evolution is no doubt positive, the security situation in Burundi continues to be hampered by military clashes between the Government forces and the Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu-Forces nationales de libération (Palipehutu-FNL), which remains outside the peace process, and acts of violence committed by its members against the civilian population. The Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation of Burundi stated to the Group that the leaders of the FNL were increasingly isolated and that the Government had set up sites to host the increasing number of their combatants who are willing to stop fighting. The Group calls for respect for human rights and considers that progress needs to be made to further consolidate peace and to put an end to ongoing violence in some provinces of the country. In view of the presence of FNL in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, continued efforts should be pursued at the regional level. In this respect, the Group encourages both the Government and FNL to seize the opportunity for negotiations with a view to bringing peace to the whole country.

6. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process is moving forward in a satisfactory manner, with around 17,000 adult combatants and 3,000 child soldiers having been demobilized. The Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme, managed by the World Bank, has given reinsertion allowances to former combatants. However, security sector reform remains a major challenge for the authorities, who will need to elaborate a comprehensive plan for the professionalization of the army and the police. This is a prerequisite for increased transparency in their management and a better human rights record. The Government has also launched a campaign for the disarmament of the civilian population and given three weeks for the registration of illegally owned arms. The curfew which had been in effect since 1972, has been lifted.

Humanitarian situation

7. On the humanitarian front, the period under review is marked by the persistence of an acute food crisis. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), 20 per cent of the Burundi population is chronically food-insecure and dependent on emergency relief assistance. Heavy dependence of the population on subsistence agriculture, land fragmentation and deterioration of soils are the backdrop of this ongoing crisis. During the period under review, droughts, crop diseases and political insecurity have made the situation worse. In 2006, an estimated 2.2 million Burundians are expected to be in need of food aid, of a total population of 8 million. The Government launched an emergency appeal in fall 2005 and has made additional efforts to provide food and seeds and improve water management. WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international actors are providing vital assistance to the food-insecure population. FAO has indicated that the current pattern of rains during the agricultural season has been satisfactory even though the amount of rainfall in some areas has been below the average needed.

8. This situation has had an impact on the flow of refugees. Towards the end of 2005, there was a steady increase in the number of Burundian returnees from the United Republic of Tanzania, with over 10,000 returnees a month. However, lack of food and growing insecurity have generated an outward flow of Burundians to the United Republic of Tanzania, including some who had recently repatriated to Burundi. Meanwhile, over 20,000 Rwandans crossed into Burundi; many of them have sought refugee status. So far, 1,279 Rwandan applications have been processed, of which only 52 were deemed eligible for refugee status.

9. With an estimated 233,000 Burundians residing in the United Republic of Tanzania and a similar number of "long-term refugees" from 1972 also residing in Tanzania, the return of refugees is expected to increase again. A tripartite agreement between the Government of Burundi, the United Republic of Tanzania and UNHCR signed on 21 March 2006 concluded, inter alia, that the time had come to move progressively from facilitation to the promotion of voluntary repatriation. With the ongoing withdrawal of ONUB, resulting in the reduction of its capacity to provide security, logistical and other operational support, the capacity of Burundian and international actors to create the conditions for the proper and sustained return of refugees is a major challenge. However, an estimated 10,000 Burundians who had sought "asylum" in the United Republic of Tanzania since November 2005 have voluntarily and spontaneously returned to Ruyigi province in Burundi in early April,

soon after the tripartite commission agreed to provide food to the population in the area.

Economic and social conditions

10. The Human Development Index of Burundi is 0.378 for 2005, ranking 169 out of 177 countries, an increase compared to the figures for 2003, when the Group was established (0.337, ranking 171 out of 175 countries). The civil war had a devastating impact on the economy of the country, with the gross domestic product (GDP) falling from 1.2 billion in 1991 to 0.69 billion in 2001. With the end of the conflict, economic growth has increased and could reach 6 per cent between 2006 and 2008. Burundi's public finances have also improved with the interim debt relief granted to the country.

11. This positive trend should not obscure the fact that the economy of Burundi remains highly dependent on the fluctuation of commodity prices, as the agricultural sector, particularly coffee, accounts for 50 per cent of GDP and 85 per cent of export earnings. In this post-transition phase, it is therefore essential to create opportunities for public and private investment, develop infrastructure and encourage diversification of activities, including creating opportunities for the processing of agricultural products.

12. When she met the Group, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burundi stressed the efforts made by the Government to improve governance and the management of public finances. An anti-corruption law has been adopted and financial control and audit capacities are strengthened. Another important aspect is decentralization, which requires training and management skills to allow newly elected representatives to perform their duties. The Minister also announced the establishment of a national commission on land and property to prevent and settle conflict of land ownership. The establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission should contribute to enhancing reconciliation within the society and to consolidating peace.

13. In its initial report to the Council, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group stressed that education was a key lever for a sustained post-crisis recovery and encouraged the Government to facilitate access to education for all, including by waiving school fees for indigent children (see E/2004/11, para. 71). The Group was pleased to learn that the elected Government decided to ensure universal and free access to primary education for the school year 2005-2006, which led to a sharp increase in the number of students, boys and girls. ONUB, United Nations agencies and development partners, including countries from the region, have supported the Government to respond to this situation, which reflects the willingness of the people of Burundi to give a better future to their children. The efforts of the Government in this field should be further supported.

III. International donor support to Burundi

14. International assistance to Burundi has increased over the past year. The political evolution of the country towards greater stability and efforts made towards improved management and poverty reduction explain this positive trend.

The Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal process

15. In 2005, funding received for projects and activities under the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal amounted to US$ 68,451,448 of the required US$ 121,421,099 (revised requirements under the Appeal mid-year review), namely 56 per cent. In addition, contributions were made for food-aid programmes under the Great Lakes regional Appeal and humanitarian projects not included in those appeals (respectively US$ 33 million and US$ 23 million as of October 2005). Humanitarian requirements had increased by 62 per cent compared to previous years, owing to increasing needs to support returnees and engage in community recovery. However, according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the implementation of recovery programmes remained poorly funded compared to the agriculture and health sectors. As the Group previously reported to the Council, it is important to go beyond the boundaries of international assistance to provide longer-term support to communities and build capacities for the future. International support to Burundi should therefore be increasingly provided under the prism of the transition from relief to development.

16. The Appeal for 2006, which embraces this approach, requests US$ 129,407,889, to which funding requirements for food aid under the Great Lakes regional Appeal are to be added. As of early April 2006, only 7 per cent of the Burundi Appeal for 2006 was covered. Financial backing and commitment needs to be realized for the UNHCR contingency plan for refugee returns, which amounts to US$ 4,577,000. In February 2006, the executive heads of UNHCR, WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund carried out an unprecedented joint mission to the Great Lakes region, which testifies to increased coordination in the United Nations response to this type of crisis. It is important that these agencies be given the means to control the situation through appropriate action at the regional level.

17. The work of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the field of health deserves to be mentioned, as NGOs expanded their essential package programme in 2005 to cover over 300 health centres, providing them with essential drugs and equipment and health-care service provision and training, including HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, as well as health screening for returning refugees. In addition to the Appeal process, the United Nations Development Programme launched its programme of cooperation with Burundi for the period 2005-2007. The programme, funded at US$ 38 million, will cover three main fields: governance, reintegration/rehabilitation of war victims and poverty alleviation, and HIV/AIDS.

Debt relief

18. In August 2005, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund agreed that Burundi had taken the necessary steps to reach the decision point under the enhanced heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative. The country was granted access to interim debt relief, a position that was endorsed by the African Development Bank. According to the World Bank, Burundi's debt service payments should over time be lowered by about US$ 1.5 billion in nominal terms. To reach the completion point under the HIPC initiative, Burundi will need to continue to follow satisfactorily benchmarks under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility of the International Monetary Fund, implement a poverty reduction strategy for a

full year, which the Government is currently finalizing, and reach results on the announced key structural and social reforms.

19. Given these requirements, the financial needs of the country and the vulnerability of the economy to external shocks, debt relief by itself will not give the Government enough room to manoeuvre to satisfy basic needs of the population and build capacities. Direct financial support continues to be crucial. In January 2006, the World Bank granted US$ 30 million in additional funding for its ongoing public works and employment creation project.

Donor support

20. During the period under review, the Group held two meetings with Antoinette Batumubwira, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Burundi. The meeting was opened to other donor countries, countries of the region, the African Union and the European Commission, as well as several United Nations entities and representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions, in an effort to provide an opportunity for the Government of Burundi to reach out to major partners.

21. The Minister announced that two donor conferences were planned: the first one to discuss a one-year support programme aimed at satisfying the most pressing needs of the people and allowing them to see the dividends of peace, and the second one scheduled for September 2006, with the aim of mobilizing as many donors as possible around the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and its three-year implementation plan, which would be presented at the next Board meeting of the World Bank in May. The Minister stressed the complementarities in the development plans prepared by the Government and the existing articulation between them.

22. Since the Group met the Minister, a conference of development partners was held on 28 February 2006 in Bujumbura, with representatives of major donor countries, countries of the region, the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, the European Commission, the Bretton Woods institutions, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the United Nations system led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi. The Government presented an emergency programme for 2006, based on its long-term vision, entitled the "Integral human development of Burundi". The programme has the following strategic priorities: (a) promoting peace and good governance; (b) promoting accelerated economic growth for poverty reduction; (c) promoting basic social services; (d) inserting war victims (*sinistrés*) and other disadvantaged groups in the economy; (e) strengthening the fight against HIV/AIDS; and (f) promoting the participation of women in development.

23. During the conference, participants praised the efforts of the Government to promote stability and expressed their willingness to consolidate progress through increased international assistance. The total amount solicited by the Government, namely US$ 178 million, was covered by the pledges made, partly through new resources and by reallocating funds of ongoing programmes. While some 15 donors

made pledges, European Commission support to Burundi in 2006 represents over a third of the assistance to be provided under the emergency programme .[1]

24. The Government of Burundi has put in place a national committee for aid coordination to increase dialogue with donors. This mechanism will have an important role to play in preparing for the donor conference scheduled in September 2006 to consider the full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which, in the meantime, should be presented to the Bretton Woods institutions. The Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation invited the Group to visit Burundi and assist in mobilizing donors in the preparation of the September conference.

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

25. **The Ad Hoc Advisory Group is encouraged and pleased by the important progress made in Burundi since the substantive session of the Council in 2005. Clearly, a page in the history of Burundi has been turned. After more than 10 years of civil war and a challenging transition period, duly elected authorities are building new relations with their development partners, based on strong ownership of the development process and solid interaction with donors. Finalization of the full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper should precipitate opportunities to leverage the success of the February conference for longer-term support. In this context, the Group calls on donors to respond generously to the United Nations Consolidated Appeal Inter-Agency, including funding to the UNHCR contingency plan for refugee returns, and to the Government's requests at the donor conference to be held in September 2006.**

26. **The Group is aware of the challenges remaining to be met to avoid a relapse into conflict, in particular the vulnerability of the population and the structural weaknesses of the economy, including the land issue. It also recognizes that this situation requires the continued commitment of the Government of Burundi supported by the long-term involvement of the international community, which should be commensurate with the needs of the population and appropriate to the regional context.**

27. **The Group recognizes that most of its recommendations to the Council (see E/2004/11 paras. 57-80) have been or are being implemented. The development plans prepared by the Government and presented to donors follow a similar line of action and will contribute to further implementation of these recommendations. The Group encourages Burundi to continue on the course of the reforms agreed in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, while maintaining the spirit of dialogue, consensus and inclusion that made the successful transition of the country possible.**

28. **As ONUB is phasing out, the quality of the relations of Burundi with bilateral and multilateral partners is of utmost importance. This evolution**

[1] Pledges made in euros amounted to €46,366,500 and were made by Belgium (24.8 million), France (4 million), Germany (5 million), Italy (600,000), the Netherlands (4.9 million), the World Bank (10 million) and the IFAD (66,500). Pledges in United States dollars were made by Egypt (166,000), Japan (8.8 million), Morocco (100,000), Nigeria (250,000), the United Kingdom (10 million), the International Monetary Fund (22 million) and the African Development Bank (7 million). Switzerland pledged 7 million Swiss francs.

should be taken into account by the international community. When she met the Group, the Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation expressed interest in having Burundi included in the agenda of the newly established Peacebuilding Commission. Should Burundi request inclusion, the Group considers that it would, indeed gain from the attention and cooperation generated by this new body. While the existence of an ad hoc body has been suitable to follow the transition process in Burundi, consideration of international cooperation in the current situation would be better dealt with by a permanent body like the Peacebuilding Commission. This would allow the international community to further support and accompany the Government and people of Burundi.

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Sustainable development: follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2006
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Item 13 (a) of the provisional agenda**
Economic and environmental questions: sustainable development

Letter dated 21 April 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the final report of the Pacific Regional Meeting to follow up implementation of the Mauritius Strategy held in Apia, from 17 to 19 October 2005 (see annex).

On behalf of the small island developing States participating in the meeting, I request that the attached report be issued as a document of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council. I further request that the document also be made available to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourteenth session.

(*Signed*) Ali'ioaiga Feturi **Elisaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 21 April 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Pacific Regional Meeting to follow up the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation

17-19 October 2005, Apia

Executive Summary

1. Political will and national ownership

- Collective cooperation and partnerships approach to implementation of the BPOA and MSI are essential.
- National understanding, ownership and political will to embrace, support and market the MSI is central to securing commitment from other partners at all levels to support it's implementation.

2. Importance of national sustainable development enabling environment

- Implementation of the MSI at the national level must be nationally driven and coordinated on an appropriate national platform to facilitate sustainable development. The support to these national level platforms must be at an absorptive rate that is reflective of the capacity within those mechanisms.
- Operationalizing the MSI at the National level requires effective integrated decision-making and planning environments. This was identified in the Pacific Position and was highlighted in the MSI. How to create these enabling environments and engage all the relevant stakeholders is a challenge and is an objective of all stakeholders.
- We need to use existing mechanisms where possible to operationalize the MSI at the national level; this may mean the need to improve current planning systems.
- The Tuvalu and Kiribati frameworks for developing and implementing their NSDS are good examples of building on existing planning processes that could be adopted for use in other SIDS.
- The importance of translating a NSDS or the like into the budgetary process is central to being able to implement the NSDS or development plan.
- The NSDS should facilitate and create partnerships and good guidelines to engage partners.
- UNDESA underscored the importance of the NSDS as a basis for facilitating sustainable development at the national level.
- NSDS should be viewed as a coordinated set of participatory and continuously evolving processes of analysis, debate, decision-making, capacity development, planning, investment, monitoring and evaluation which seek to integrate the short and long-term economic, social and environmental objectives of society through mutually supportive approaches wherever possible and managing trade offs where this is not possible.

- There should be a move from broad awareness of sustainable development through better coherence and coordination in the short term, to full integration of the three pillars of SD.
- A shift from government control of the SD agenda to greater engagement with stakeholders (at least partial engagement in the short term) and shared responsibility of implementation.
- A shift from sectoral approaches towards development to cross-sectoral approaches and ultimately to a fully balanced cross-sectoral approach is necessary.
- NSDS should be developed by national experts rather than by consultants because these consultants are often not responsible for implementation of the NSDS. Engagement and wide stakeholder ownership of the NSDS is also very important. NSDS consultation must thus be an exercise that is conducted and owned by government and the public.
- It was recommended that the PIF UN Missions should consult with Italy on how the NSDS project could be reprogrammed to take account of ongoing efforts in the region. Participants were also informed of the variety of regional and national efforts currently underway. In light of this information it would appear that the DESA support should best be directed towards the development and/or implementation of NSDS's or the like in accordance with the specific situation of each SIDS.
- Furthermore support should build on what has been achieved in the WSSD/MIM processes so as not to duplicate national efforts. This will require that the project be informed by, and closely implemented with, ongoing work of Pacific SIDS and their regional organizations, and that it specifically involve personnel already working on sustainable development national consultations at the national and regional levels. The Italy/DESA national sustainable development strategies should reflect these important considerations. It was also noted that a discussion with the project's management would have been beneficial for the meeting.

3. Strengthening national capacity

- It is very important to localize the MSI before trying to communicate it to people as many people don't understand what the MSI or BPoA are all about.
- It is crucial to help at least conceptually integrate all documents of international platforms relevant to sustainable development at the national level to operationalize them in a simple framework.
- Instead of worrying about operationalizing the MSI in its entirety at the national level the focus should be on operationalizing 'sustainable development' at the National level. The MSI is an international agreement that facilitates commitment from partners to help in a number of areas and this can be used to direct assistance to nationally identified sustainable development issues.
- To market the MSI locally and nationally, keep it simple and use people who have far reaching contacts and are able to communicate effectively.
- The crucial issue of capacity in SIDS is a major barrier to the implementation of sustainable development in SIDS. This varies between PICs and must be a key consideration in the approaches to the implementation of the MSI.

- Some selective practical initiatives must be implemented at the national level to show by example how to improve our resilience. While planning is important, actions speak louder than words and highlight practical examples of what we can change now and how we can progress sustainable development practically. The MSI should facilitate these kinds of initiatives. These practical examples will then highlight the best way for future planning having learnt this from these practical examples such as the biofuel initiative in Fiji.
- Energy security is a real issue facing Pacific SIDS and Fiji presented a good example of how they are restructuring and implementing a biofuel strategy to increase their resilience to rising fuel prices.
- Waste management is also a real issue that impacts on the health, environment and potential priority areas of development and the economy (such as tourism). Samoa presented their Waste Strategy and some of the practicalities in implementing and addressing their priorities as identified by public perception.
- Samoa's Waste Strategy has promoted partnerships between private sector, government and the public to address an important and pressing issue.
- Putting the cost of dealing with waste back on the producer and user of these products is important for sustainable funding of waste management. Currently the government pays for this service which is unsustainable but currently allows the government to stipulate what is not allowed in the waste stream that is collected e.g. plastic bags.

4. Importance of regional support and partnerships

- Joint implementation is important to reduce duplication and become more efficient in the way we engage our partners to deliver services and assistance to PICs. The Pacific Plan can improve this process along with efficient CROP working groups and regional partnerships.
- Having outlined the regional policies listed in the Pacific Plan and those priority areas in the MSI, it is clear where there are complementarities and where there are gaps.
- The importance of effective regional partnerships as a means to facilitate implementation and effective use of resources in different areas was emphasized.
- The value of the regional partnership is to allow for donors to focus on what is being implemented in the region and facilitates a more cooperative approach. It also highlights the proactive approach being taken by the region to address sustainable development priorities. But this requires the full engagement by the Pacific SIDS in international conferences and other opportunities. Partnerships also encourage a longer-term approach to the implementation process and can seek to facilitate a lessening of reporting requirements. A formal clearing house mechanism should also be strengthened.
- A number of best practice aspects of partnership implementation were highlighted during the presentations on updates of the Ocean, Nature Conservation and Water Management partnerships. Those best practices are summarized as follows.
    - Partnership must be based on a Regional Policy or agreement that has wide ownership and preferably endorsed by a regional governing council and/or the Leaders.

- A dedicated partnership facilitator is preferable.
- Wide representation of stakeholders on partnerships is important e.g. governments, donors, non-government donors and agencies, private sector.
- Formalized reporting and monitoring that is simple and easily accessible by the international, regional and national stakeholders.
- Strong links to national policy and delivery mechanisms.
- Should actively facilitate connection between national needs and regional and international resources and partners.
- Promote mainstreaming of the thematic issue into National Sustainable Development processes.
- Should consider the 3 dimensions of sustainable development, those being environment, social and economic factors.

- The development partners in the region informed that they view favourably the partnerships that fit in with other mechanisms in the region, and have supported a few key partnerships. They wish to see the practical applications on the ground. They recommended linking the work of the regional councils with efforts in New York, linking also the capital-based implementers and the overseas representatives. Significant bilateral agreements are also in place that could be utilized for promoting the national level sustainable development strategies in support of the MSI.
- It was agreed that the outcomes of the PIF be used to update the road map and then approach the various donors at upcoming opportunities to promote Pacific Partnerships and priorities in order to facilitate resourcing and engaging partners for implementation in some of these key areas.
- A key recommendation was made regarding the possibility of pooling of resources so that countries could promote national projects through regional programmes making it easier to access resources e.g. on priority issues such as sustainable water supply.
- For consistency there is a need also to ensure that SIDS representatives attending various meetings coordinate their interventions to ensure there are clear links between the Pacific Plan and the MSI, and the relevant themes are emphasized. This will ensure for example that decisions of the UNESCO general conference are informed by the priorities established by the Pacific Plan and MSI This requires not only detailed statements but also active engagement in the working groups developing the final decisions.
- Consideration of entrusting a few delegations to represent the whole region at meetings with low representation should be considered. (e.g. as per Pacific representation in the GEF Governing Council).

5. Importance of international support and frameworks

- Clear simple, collaborative frameworks at the International level, in particular the UN systems linked to donors and other stakeholders, are necessary to effectively focus various programmes and assistance on priority issues under the MSI, including through an inter-agency consultative taskforce, UN Matrix for implementation of the MSI.

- There is good value in the comprehensive framework that is being developed, which outlines UN Agencies various programmes that could assist SIDS, including the establishment of the IACG. More importantly this information enables SIDS to strategically direct UN Agencies to provide further assistance through their programmes that focuses specifically on SIDS issues in the context of the MSI.
- In addition, there is a need to link the international level current and planned activities with the efforts at the Regional level in support of national activities. This can be facilitated by the linking of the matrices being developed by the IACG and the CROP SDWG as a form of a clearing house mechanism.
- The work of operationalization of the MSI will also need to be linked with the UNDP coordinated country programmes and consultative processes as well as to the planned donor harmonization consultations.
- There is a need to streamline and show the clear linkages between the UN and Pacific matrices as an important step in moving forward to ensure that there are not too many documents floating around without a framework that is comprehensive and which gives a clearer bigger picture of where everything sits.
- Further recommendations to expand the objectives of IACG to include advocacy of SIDS specific concerns in processes of the MEAs and MTAs.
- It was also noted that the need for the presence of the UN system on the ground in the under-served SIDS should be guided by the experience of the FAO projects, involving long-term placement of technical experts in the countries, which also sought to ensure the expert's familiarity with the region and the countries for most effective delivery of assistance.

6. Future engagement of the international community

- There is a need to develop a marketing plan that promotes the internationally agreed MSI at all levels as the blueprint for sustainable development of SIDS.
- The Rome Inter-regional SIDS meeting on MSI implementation offers an important opportunity to get clear commitment as to how donors will help SIDS implement the MSI through collaborative mechanisms. It is important in this regard for SIDS to show coordinated commitment at the national and regional levels to implementing the MSI at this meeting.
- UNDESA was urged to invite and ensure that donors are actively pursued to attend the Rome meeting.
- Identify a list of approved regional projects for which there may be new opportunities for funding and which the PIF UN Missions can market in NY and in the upcoming Rome Meeting.
- Some key opportunities identified included the following: the Rome Meeting, CSD, Post Forum Dialogue Partners discussion, GEF Governing Council, EDF10, COP of MEA's (e.g. upcoming opportunity at CBD – Island Biodiversity Programme of Work), WTO, and regional agency governing councils.

- There needs to be a concerted and urgent effort to support efforts of SIDS to bring the international community to translate the recognition of the SIDS special case into modalities of special treatment in the trade and economic fora. This requires in the first instance a step towards developing a clear definition of SIDS and some clear criteria for recognizing the special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS by agencies such as the World Bank and WTO.
- Must actively try to ensure that the multilateral funding mechanisms are called on to reflect the MSI and the special case of SIDS.

7. Linkages and Issues relevant to CSD14-15

- CSD14 offers an opportunity to highlight the link between climate change, energy, atmosphere and industrial development through innovative options. If SIDS themselves show how biofuel can be a substitute to fossil fuel, this promotes to the international community options they can take to decrease the use of fossil fuels contributing to Climate Change.
- Energy is a key factor in the sustainable development of SIDS and their ability to continue to earn foreign exchange.
- Increasing our resilience to external factors such as oil prices requires innovation and examining some of our current practices and resources that could be used differently.
- Engaging research through SIDS-SIDS partnerships such as the University Consortium can facilitate sharing of experiences and appropriate technologies to promote biofuels.
- Pacific SIDS can learn from each other with the experiences that currently happen in each country. The use of biofuels in Vanuatu, Cook Islands, American Samoa is a good example of the feasibility of such initiatives and can only be improved through sharing experiences.
- There are many solutions within our region to sustainable use of resources and substitution for costly imported products and these need to be highlighted.
- There are many innovative ideas that need to be explored particularly through SIDS-SIDS cooperation.
- All Islands are different and one size does not fit all by way of innovative use of resources. There needs to be a process in place that examines the way things currently work and looks at the possibilities there are to change these traditional practices and become innovative to overcome the changing pressures facing us.

Enclosure 1
Summary of proceedings

The Pacific Regional Meeting to Follow-up Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy was convened in Samoa from 17 to 19 October 2005 at the Hotel Kitano Tusitala. The meeting was attended by Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Australia and New Zealand attended as observers. The following organizations were also represented: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP/POC), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Educational, Scientific And Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the University of the South Pacific (USP).

Concern was raised by delegations at the absence of Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, given that Office's role of advocacy for SIDS. Concern was also raised regarding the difficulties encountered over the 2nd funded participant for the meeting.

The opening session was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations, who was also elected Chairman of the Meeting. Ms. Anastacia Amoa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Samoa, was elected Rapporteur of the Meeting. PIFS and SIDS Unit provided the secretariat.

Session 1 – Setting the Scene

Introductory remarks were made by the PIFS Chair (Ambassador Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia) on the main challenges and opportunities facing the Pacific region in the operationalization of Sustainable Development and implementation of the MSI. An introduction to the challenges at the international level was made by Diane Quarless, Chief, SIDS Unit, UNDESA. The regional challenges in the Pacific in Operationalizing the Mauritius Strategy was introduced by Padma Lal, (PIFS). This was followed by an open discussion of national level challenges. Statements were made by SOPAC, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Fiji, Tuvalu, Nauru, Samoa, FSM, Tonga and Timor-Leste.

Session 2 – International and Regional Support

a.) International Level: An introduction to the Global Programmes to Operationalize the MSI was presented by Diane Quarless, Chief SIDS Unit. Joyce Yu, the Resident Representative of UNDP presented the existing UN regional mechanisms in the Pacific. Statements were made by Solomon Islands, Fiji and USP.

b.) Regional Level: The Mauritius Matrix for Implementation in the Pacific in the context of the Pacific Plan and regional policies and partnerships was presented by Amena Yauvoli, sustainable development Advisor SPREP. Statements were made by UNCTAD, ESCAP, Papua New Guinea, PIFS, SOPAC, Tonga, Timor-Leste and Samoa.

Session 3 - Country Presentations

Consideration of national mechanisms and frameworks for most effective implementation of the BPOA/MSI, and strategies to meet the monitoring and reporting obligations of the BPOA/MSI and other development platforms such as the MDGs. Statements were made by Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, ESCAP, Kiribati, Timor-Leste, Tonga and DESA.

Session 4 - National Partnerships

National Partnerships: The discussion on NSDS and MDG based National Plans was continued, with a view to engage these stakeholders to assist PICs. A presentation was made by Diane Quarles (SIDS Unit).

Session 5 – Regional and International Partnerships and Cooperation

Presentations were made on Regional Partnerships and some of the priorities of the region by Coral Pasisi (PIFS), Dominique Benzaken (SPREP), Russell Howorth (SOPAC) and Vili Fuavao (FAO). Statements were made by FSM, Nauru, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia.

Session 6 – Integrated International Approach Illustration using the CSD 14/15 Theme
Consideration of integrated approaches to the implementation of the MSI – linkages and synergies between sectors, using the themes for CSD14/15 as example (climate change, energy, atmosphere and industrial development).

DESA moderated a discussion on the linkages and synergies between these sectors, with a view to utilizing the outcome of this discussion as critical input to the special SIDS report to CSD-14 and to future CSD sessions, as well as to other UN meetings and conferences. A presentation was made by Espen Ronneberg, Inter-Regional Advisor for SIDS.

Session 7 - Conclusion of the meeting

Consideration was given to the meeting's report as presented by the Rapporteur. The meeting adopted the decisions and recommendations contained in the summary as listed in the above report. Statements of thanks were made by Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Fiji and DESA. The Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Enclosure 2
Pacific Regional Meeting to follow up implementation of the Mauritius Strategy

Outcome Statement

1 We, representatives of Pacific SIDS, (Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), together with Timor-Leste met in Apia, 17-19th October to review progress with commencing implementation in and for our countries of the Mauritius Strategy (MS).

2 In accordance with UN GA Res59/311, we reaffirmed that the MS, JPoI, MDGs and other international instruments, together with the Pacific Plan, and other regional policies, frameworks and action plans and partnership initiatives, are instruments available to assist us at the national level.

3 We reaffirmed our efforts to establish an enabling environment to support sustainable development.

4 We reaffirmed the urgent need to simplify the processes for accessing financial and technical resources to support our efforts to support sustainable development.

5 We agreed that at international level:

- Pacific SIDS must market their special needs in all international fora in regard to implementing the MS for harmonization of development partner support.
- Agencies within the UN system are urged to improve coordination and collaboration with each other and Pacific regional organizations, in their support to the Pacific SIDS.
- The forthcoming Inter-Regional SIDS Meeting in Rome, 15-16th November, provides an opportunity to engage with the international community to secure necessary resources in support of a programmatic approach to development. UNDESA should target this as a key objective of that upcoming meeting.
- The Pacific has agreed partnerships and regional policies/strategies that could provide good platforms to market Pacific SIDS needs.

6 We agreed that at regional level:

- The CROP sustainable development working group, in consultation with other regional organizations will, by the end of 2005, develop a Pacific SIDS matrix in order to integrate the internationally and regionally agreed commitments, in particular the MS and the Pacific Plan.
- To improve the effectiveness and service delivery to member countries, CROP agencies are urged to strengthen collaboration and harmonisation of their activities.

7 We agreed that at national level, the following urgent actions must be nationally driven and nationally owned, inclusive of all stakeholders, be community-focused and based, and utilize a joint-programming initiative.

- To mainstream the MS, including through the developing and implementing NSDS, or equivalent process.
- To use the Pacific SIDS matrix to assist us with our sustainable development actions.
- To integrate efforts of all the UN agencies (including the upcoming GEF country consultations, and UN country team planning, the UNDESA Italy Project and the development of a matrix for implementation of the MS) into national sustainable development actions, and including the assistance being provided by CROP.
- To integrate the support from multilateral and bilateral development partners with these actions.

8 We acknowledge the participation of Timor-Leste and encourage them to make use of this statement and the outcomes report of this meeting to assist them with their sustainable development efforts.

9 We acknowledged and expressed our appreciation to the Government of Samoa for hosting the meeting, UNDESA SIDS Unit for convening the meeting, to the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, CROP organizations, the UNDP Samoa Office, the ESCAP Pacific Office, FAO and UNESCO Subregional Offices and UNCTAD, for their support and participation.

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Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

At the heart of the United Nations development agenda endorsed at the 2005 World Summit stands the promise to reduce poverty and to enhance equity and social integration. Recognizing the crucial role of employment to that end, leaders resolved "to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all a central objective of [their] relevant national and international policies".

In the context of that commitment, the present report addresses the key aspects of the structural challenges of employment creation. It argues that the achievement of the commitments made by world leaders requires the reconciliation of the current focus on economic growth with social and environmental outcomes. To that end, it places employment at the centre of economic, social and environmental agendas and contains recommendations in all three areas.

* E/2006/100.

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I. Introduction

1. At about 192 million, the number of people unemployed worldwide climbed to new heights in 2005. Even more striking, the extreme working poor are nearly three times as many as the global unemployed, and 50 per cent of the global labour force earns $2 a day or less in per capita terms, for themselves and their families — the same number as 10 years ago. The world, in short, is facing a structural challenge for job creation, one that growth alone appears incapable of resolving.

2. Employment per se is not sufficient to attain the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations development agenda if it does not generate sufficient income for individuals and households to move out of poverty, or if work is under precarious and hazardous conditions. Greater attention, therefore, needs to be paid to decent work, defined as "opportunities for men and women to obtain productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity".[1] The centrality of decent work derives, of course, from the centrality of work to people's lives. Work is where the "economic" dimension of people's lives meets the "social". Decent work is central not only as a source of income, but also as a condition for people to live a self-determined life, and to participate fully as citizens in their communities. As such it facilitates social integration and social cohesion. It is also essential for the long-term recovery of countries emerging from conflict.

3. Recognizing the crucial role of employment for poverty reduction, gender equality, women's empowerment and social integration, leaders at the World Summit in September 2005 resolved "to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all a central objective of [their] relevant national and international policies".[2] This places a great responsibility on individual Governments and the international community, including the multilateral system.

4. The dual challenge is the creation of new productive jobs and the improvement of existing ones. In recent years, however, the employment content of growth seems to have weakened, while the effective supply of labour has increased owing to external opening and the growing participation of developing countries in the world economy, in combination with continued high fertility rates in many developing countries and a rise in participation rates of women. Consequently, an increasing number of jobs has to be created to absorb the expanding labour force, while, at the same time, higher rates of growth are now needed to generate the same rates of job growth than was the case 15 years ago. Policies are therefore needed that focus both on increasing growth, and increasing its employment content.

5. Globalization and technological change are exposing increasing shares of national economies to intense competition that requires flexible labour markets in order to allow labour to relocate between firms, sectors or even regions. Although, from a global perspective, it is likely that "off-shoring" (i.e. the trend to increasingly relocate labour-intensive (and low-skilled) parts of the production process from developed to developing countries) creates more jobs, in the process it leads to labour displacement in the affected countries. Global competitive pressure has in many instances also led to an emphasis on greater wage flexibility, reduction

[1] Report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization on decent work, submitted to the International Labour Conference at its 87th session, June 1999, International Labour Office, Geneva, chap. I.

[2] General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 47.

of regulations and taxes, reduction in employment, including in the public sector, dilution of bargaining power, and reduced Government expenditure in areas vital to the poor, such as health, education and social protection systems.

6. Changes in labour-market institutions and social provision have therefore increasingly limited the redistribution of economic rewards towards labour. The result of those changes has been that in many countries employment has increasingly become informal, wage shares of national incomes have declined and wage differences between skilled and unskilled labour have increased. In developed and developing countries alike, there is also an enduring trend of horizontal and vertical sex segregation in the labour market owing, among others, to gender inequalities in education, training and recruitment that are the cause of, inter alia, persistent gender wage gaps in all sectors throughout the world. All these changes and structural patterns in the labour market can be viewed as the symptoms of an acute lack of attention to achieve a balance between economic and social outcomes, reflected in the low priority that the goal of full employment and decent work currently receives in international policies, including in the design of poverty reduction strategies. Indeed, employment levels have often become incidental outcomes of market processes.

7. Effective policymaking and the implementation of employment and labour-market policies require the active engagement of employers and workers through their freely chosen and representative organizations. Sound labour-management relations and collective bargaining can also contribute to the management of change and the raising of the productive performance of enterprises and the economy as a whole. Such bipartite and tripartite approaches, known as social dialogue, can support Governments in improving the quality, relevance, timeliness and balance of public policies to promote decent and productive work.

8. Creating an environment conducive to full employment and decent work in the context of globalization has multiple implications for the three pillars of sustainable development. Insofar as employment generation contributes to economic prosperity and poverty reduction, it strengthens the economic and social pillars. With regard to the environmental dimension, it has increasingly become evident that the growing and cumulative scale of economic activities has already produced negative environmental effects with national and global ramifications. While the primary cause of environmental degradation is the unsustainable consumption and production patterns, it can also be caused by poverty. Thus, to the extent that employment strategies alleviate poverty they can support the environmental dimension of sustainable development. Moreover, new "green" technologies can also create new employment. Hence, employment creation and protection of the environment are not necessarily mutually exclusive objectives and can often be made compatible.

9. In view of the wide scope of this theme and the need to present to the Economic and Social Council a concise policy document, the present report is accompanied by a conference room paper (E/2006/CRP.2), which contains a broader and more detailed analysis of the subject.

II. Diagnostics of current trends in employment

10. According to the International Labour Organization *Global Employment Trends Brief*, at the end of 2005, the world's unemployment rate stood at 6.3 per cent, unchanged from the previous year and 0.3 percentage points higher than a decade earlier. In total, nearly 192 million people were unemployed around the world, an increase of 2.2 million since 2004 and 34.4 million since 1995. In particular, unemployment of women increased by 13.2 million from 1995, reaching 77.9 million in 2004. Almost half of the unemployed people in the world are young people, a worrisome fact given that youth make up only 25 per cent of the working-age population.[3]

11. Unemployment is a weak indicator of decent work deficits, however, for unemployment is only the tip of the iceberg of the global employment challenge, as most people in developing countries simply cannot afford to be unemployed owing to the lack of social protection. Of the over 2.8 billion workers in the world, nearly half are underemployed or, owing to low productivity and other factors, do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the $2 a day poverty line — just as many as 10 years ago.[3] Most work in the informal economy, which during the last decade was the main source of job growth in many developing countries. In fact, the informal economy now comprises one half to three quarters of non-agricultural employment in developing countries, typically employing more women than men. Given those trends, it is not only unemployment, but particularly underemployment and low-productive employment that are the primary challenges. The policy framework for poverty reduction therefore should focus on both employment creation and productivity growth. To that end, employment strategies should both improve the productivity of workers in dynamically growing sectors and focus on building capacity in those sectors of the economy where the majority of labour is concentrated.

12. From 1995 to 2005, there has been a drop in agriculture as a share of total employment from around 44.4 per cent to 40.1 per cent and a concomitant increase in services from 34.5 per cent to 38.9 per cent. Industrial employment held steady over the time period at 21 per cent. Those figures reflect a change in the expected pattern of development from agriculture to industry (with the typical rise in wages and living conditions) to, instead, a movement from agriculture to services, primarily in the urban informal economy. Given that three quarters of the world's poor live in rural and agricultural regions and that most new employment is generated in the informal economy, in many developing countries, working out of poverty means directing efforts towards the rural on- and off-farm sector, the informal economy and small and microenterprises in order to assist workers to move from low- to high-productivity activities.

13. In developed countries, erosion of the welfare state, cost-cutting induced by competitive pressures, the decreasing power of trade unions, deregulation in the labour market, and changes in technology and work organization have resulted in an increase in the number of part-time employees, and a rise in the number of contingent employment in temporary work agencies or through personal contracts. The precarious nature of the various forms of contingent employment makes it harder for the worker to obtain social rights and enjoy the economic protection the

[3] *Global Employment Trends Brief*, January 2006, International Labour Office, Geneva, p. 2.

social security system grants during times of economic distress. However, the strong growth in part-time employment in some countries, such as the Netherlands, often reflects a choice to combine work and family responsibilities — with positive effects on women's participation rates in the labour market.

14. There is also some evidence suggesting that the changes in labour-market policies, designed to increase flexibility, had adverse effects on real wages of low-skilled labour and hence contributed to the growth of wage inequality. Inter-industry wage inequality has also been rising in the more successful integrating economies, although real wages for both skilled and unskilled labour in manufacturing industries have been rising, improving overall labour conditions in those countries. Developing countries that remain dependent on exports of primary commodities, however, have largely been marginalized in the process of global integration. Overcoming that marginalization requires further liberalization of trade in primary commodities and a significant reduction in tariff escalation, as well as productive diversification and increased value added content of exports, including processing of primary commodities.

III. The role of macroeconomic and trade policies: national and international perspectives

15. The goal of decent work for all has to be considered in the context of the overall macroeconomic environment and can only be achieved through an integrated and coherent set of policies at the national and international levels. As such, sound macroeconomic policies and a balanced national development agenda conducive to high economic growth rates are imperative for the creation of a more favourable environment to achieve employment and poverty reduction objectives. However, while economic stability as reflected in key macroeconomic indicators is important for generating investment and economic growth, many countries have followed too stringent stabilization measures that have failed to generate the much-needed economic growth vital for job creation and poverty alleviation. Fiscal space for public expenditures should therefore be preserved, especially in situations of economic and employment stagnation and recession that may require counter-cyclical policies.

16. In addition, policies should be adopted that promote an enabling economic environment, including good governance, appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks, sound macroeconomic policies, transparency, appropriate laws for property rights, adequate infrastructure and a developed financial sector. Certain institutions are also crucial, especially effective legal systems, sound political institutions and well-functioning bureaucracies.

17. If decent and productive work for all is to be made a central goal in national economic, social and monetary policymaking, mechanisms are also needed to ensure that the employment implications of policy decisions at all levels are assessed with a view to maximizing decent work opportunities. To that end, the commitment towards employment must encompass the entire Government, and the different ministries as well as central banks must consider the employment impact of their policy choices. The participation of civil society, including trade unions and employers' associations, in the process can ensure that policies are balanced and find a broad backing with the citizenry. Countries may also consider developing

guidelines and checklists, including the setting up of a peer review process, for use by policymakers to reflect the commitment a country makes and what priority it assigns to the goal of full employment and decent work in its overall policy framework.

18. While Governments play a key role in developing a policy environment conducive to development, enhanced international cooperation in addressing macroeconomic and trade-related issues is also important. At the international level, a more balanced and coordinated strategy for sustainable global growth and full employment, including an equitable sharing among countries of the responsibility for maintaining high levels of effective demand in the global economy, is essential. To that end, the goal of decent and productive work should be made a global objective and should be pursued through coherent policies within the multilateral system. Multilateral and bilateral development cooperation institutions should ensure that employment issues feature prominently in their operations and should launch joint programmes to facilitate coherence and synergies among them.

19. Governments, on their part, should ensure that policies pursued by their countries in international forums promote a coherent integration of economic and social policies which focus on the well-being and quality of life of people. To that end, employment policies should be fully integrated into national development and growth strategies. Employment policies should also be central to poverty reduction strategy papers. In addition, decent work country programmes should figure prominently in common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

20. Many developing countries are now competing among themselves to attract foreign investment, which can lead to the lowering of regulations, taxes, environmental protection and labour standards. Thus, there is a need to promote more transparency, coherence, as well as flexibility and policy space for countries to manage investment in a way which ensures that the benefits are realized, and the adverse effects, such as the crowding out of domestic investment, are minimized. Also required are more regional coordination and transparency of investment incentives. Public investment, particularly into labour-intensive infrastructure projects and natural resource management, is an important complementary element in that regard. It not only generates employment and growth on its own terms, but can — if well designed — attract further private investment, leading to further job creation.

21. While trade liberalization and economic integration have the potential for welfare gains in the long run, they often involve considerable adjustment costs, including job churning and deindustrialization. Phasing in trade reform carefully and ensuring that labour markets are prepared at each step can make trade policy more employment-friendly. At times, selective and temporary safeguards might be necessary as part of an industrial policy.

22. It is also important to improve developing countries' supply capacity and trade-related infrastructure in order for them to benefit from trade liberalization in a manner that stimulates employment growth. Technical support should therefore be stepped up to assist developing countries to overcome supply-side production constraints and to enable exporters to meet the requirements of international markets, including rising sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, diversify

exports and add value to commodities before exporting them. The issue of tariff escalation for processed commodities also needs to be addressed.

23. Several initiatives by the multilateral system and national donors, including the European Union, the World Trade Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Development Programme, have recognized the importance of "aid for trade" to help developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to overcome supply-side and infrastructure constraints and to cope with short-term adjustment costs. It is now important that the pronouncements to revitalize and scale up "aid for trade" become operational by the multilateral system in conjunction with donors.

24. Finally, labour migration contributes to sustaining economic activity and growth in industrialized countries, where labour forces contract owing to ageing, where there is shortage of high technology skills and where national workers shun certain sectors and occupations. International migration could play a critical role in stabilizing the labour markets of both labour importing and exporting countries if balanced, for example, against the adverse effects of the "brain drain" of skilled personnel from developing to developed countries. Emphasis should be given to policies that maximize the development benefits of migration.

IV. Labour-market challenges: balancing flexibility and social security

25. A common challenge facing integrating economies at the present time is that structural change and labour-market adjustment have become quasi-permanent features of national economies in a globalized world. Consequently, the social protection system that should accompany them has also to be institutionalized. That requires reforms of social security systems, especially regarding their aspects traditionally linked to the holding of a formal, stable job. Therefore, while the size and scope of security programmes can be adjusted depending on whether the economy is booming or in recession, a core set of policies should remain in place over the economic cycle in order for worker security to be maintained, and to allow companies the space to adapt. That, however, entails developing systems with broader and more diverse coverage, and an adequate mix of individual contributions and systemic solidarity. Social dialogue is instrumental for designing and implementing such flexibility-cum-security programmes and necessary for raising the acceptance of change.

26. While both employment protection and labour-market policies are important in providing security to workers, employment protection is often hard to maintain and layoffs tend to occur frequently. Labour-market policies can help limit the larger effects of a layoff on individual income loss and therefore on consumer spending and aggregate demand growth. By this token they enable mobility as they encourage taking on new opportunities in times of transitions and allowing firms to adjust at relatively low cost. There is no one-size-fits-all model, however, and different combinations between employment security provided at the firm level (employment protection legislation) and protection provided through the social protection system in the form of unemployment insurance and active labour-market policies, might provide flexibility with security under different conditions. Different labour-market policies therefore need to take into account the various stages of the economic

cycle, as well as different types of joblessness. Hence, policy design should be guided by a country's needs and circumstances and social and historical context, taking into account resource and capacity constraints. A meaningful social dialogue is pivotal in that regard.

27. Social protection is also a critical factor in enhancing the dynamism of the economy and the mobility of labour through guaranteed income security that stabilizes the economy during periods of recession. There are situations, however, where the State is too poor and weak to provide labour-market policies. Risk management mechanisms can then prove effective to increase the level of economic security of workers in moments of income loss. They include savings, credit both for consumption and emergency needs and for productive activities, mutual insurance, training, and public works to provide an income at times of economic slowdown or recession. Well-designed and coordinated programmes for income generation and poverty alleviation are also very important labour-market measures in developing countries. Education could also reduce the risk of unemployment.

28. Globalization and trade liberalization have also increased the need to adapt new technologies more rapidly in order to remain competitive. Poverty, illiteracy, language barriers and lack of educational opportunities hinder women more than men in accessing and using those technologies. Knowledge and skills have to be a central component of employment strategies as they determine the employability and competitiveness of the labour force and the overall investment climate of an economy. Rapidly changing skill requirements call for a comprehensive effort to increase the educational level, especially in developing countries. To enhance the employability of youth, countries may also wish to consider integrating vocational training approaches into their education systems, at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

29. The productive integration of youth — especially from poor households — into the labour market is relevant for present and future growth prospects, social mobility and cohesion, and the interruption of the intergenerational transmission of poverty. For those reasons, and because of young people's comparatively poor labour-market indicators, that issue has been taken into account in the Millennium Development Goals, and the United Nations Youth Employment Network has made several recommendations in that regard. A comprehensive strategy should focus on four elements: employability through investing in education and vocational training, and improving the impact of those investments; equal opportunities to give young women the same chances as young men; entrepreneurship, by making it easier to start up and run enterprises to provide more and better jobs; and placing employment creation at the centre of macroeconomic policy.[4] Policies to stimulate additional employment opportunities for young people coming into the labour market are vital, complemented by targeted measures to overcome the specific disadvantages many young people encounter in entering or remaining in the labour market. Measures should also be taken to create an enabling business environment and inform and assist young people in establishing or joining small enterprises, as well as to help young persons in the informal economy move to the formal economy. In order to mainstream youth employment into national development strategies,

[4] Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly transmitting the recommendations of the High-level Panel of the Youth Employment Network, document A/56/422, para. 18.

measures to enhance the employability of youth should be a key component of active labour-market policies and educational reforms.

V. Rural employment: linkages between agricultural productivity and non-farm activities

30. For many developing countries, the agricultural sector is still the main employer, especially for women, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa women contribute from 60 per cent to 80 per cent of the labour in food production both for household consumption and for sale. Non-farm activities such as agro-processing and input supply activities, however, have become increasingly important. Labour is often the only productive asset poor people own, and rural employment provides the nexus between environmental, social and economic sustainability, poverty reduction and food security. Considering that activities related to agriculture constitute a major share of the economies of developing countries, the recommended route out of poverty in rural areas is through decent employment creation but also — critically — through productivity growth in on- and off-farm activities.

31. Yet, during the past decades, there has been a period of policy neglect of the agricultural and rural sectors at the national level. Thus, there should be a resurgent focus on rural development with a view to expanding market access, employment and productivity. This is not at the expense of an equal focus on the promotion of the structural transformation of the economy to sectors of higher value addition. Rather, it is an additional focus as the working poor need to be assisted where they live and work.

32. Among the prevailing obstacles to productive and sustainable agricultural production in many countries, particularly for women, are inadequate land tenure structures and lack of secure access to resources, training and technology. In order to enhance productivity, strengthen incentives to invest in and manage land and other natural resources sustainably and reduce social disparities, including gender disparities, the rural poor should be helped to secure rights to land and access to other resources, including water, genetic resources of the forest and appropriate technology. Land reforms can be instrumental in that regard. Also, infrastructure support is pivotal for promoting improved market access, as well as for increases in both farm and non-farm productivity in rural areas. The promotion of labour-intensive approaches for building and maintenance of rural infrastructure can thereby offer new skills, employment opportunities and income for rural workers.

33. Moreover, increased access is needed to modernized information and communication technology for capacity-building so farmers can be better informed about practices, prices, access to inputs and output markets. The information gap between rural and urban areas is growing, with the potential effect of widening income differences and social disparity. The use of information and communication technologies should receive priority attention when addressing the information needs of rural areas, with a view to promoting their seamless integration into the national economy.

34. While labour-intensive approaches to productivity growth are essential, output growth is unlikely to be sustainable unless underpinned by technological change.

Some sources of labour productivity growth, however, especially capital-intensive technologies such as tractors, may increase productivity at the cost of employment, especially in the short- and medium-term. Since employment reduction in agriculture can have serious adverse implications for poverty in the short run, it is imperative to minimize those effects. As a general principle, agricultural policies in developing countries with abundant labour supply should be as employment-friendly as possible by not overemphasizing mechanization that leads to the suboptimal displacement of labour. Governments should also provide adequate social protection systems until other sectors can absorb the surplus labour.

35. Since productivity improvements will in many cases reduce agricultural labour demand, it is equally important to support the creation of productive off-farm employment, especially in rural areas. Although agriculture is still the main activity of the rural poor, around 30 per cent of total rural employment in developing countries is now found in non-farm activities. The rural non-farm sector can have positive multiplier effects for both rural employment and welfare by lowering rural unemployment or underemployment through new income generating activities as additional income leads to demand for more and new goods and services. Simultaneously, the higher income associated with productivity growth in the agricultural sector allows for the consumption of goods and services produced in the rural non-farm sector, thereby creating a virtuous cycle of productivity and employment growth. Considering the positive interaction between rural on- and off-farm economic activities and the importance of productive diversification for rural employment generation and growth, Governments should proactively facilitate the development of productive and remunerative non-farm activities as means to create employment and to deepen linkages between the agricultural sector and the broader economy. In addition to formal education, vocational training is important in providing specialized skills for business development.

36. Rural non-farm incomes also allow households to overcome credit and risk constraints on agricultural innovation, permitting crucial farm investments to raise productivity and increase farm incomes. Group strategies, such as producer groups and women's self-help groups, can thereby help address credit and market constraints and overcome existing asymmetries in the distribution of social capital. Women in particular tend to lack access to credit and the collateral needed for taking loans. Access to financial services can also help the rural poor reduce their vulnerability and widen their economic opportunities through small productive investments, enabling them to build assets over time. In rural areas there is thus a need to expand lending beyond microcredit to meet the needs of the agricultural cycle and for investment in small productivity-enhancing activities and equipment. While the successes of microcredit are well recognized, the provision of safe and flexible savings products, secure transfer and remittance facilities, and insurance services are often as important as access to loans.

37. Promoting a better functioning rural labour market is also of particular importance given that the majority of rural households participate in the labour market by hiring out their labour permanently or on a temporary basis. Job placement mechanisms should be improved through better information, incentives, and reduction of segmentation, so as to reduce transaction costs, especially aiming at increasing access for the most vulnerable.

38. Official development assistance is an important means for developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to augment public investments in such areas as human capital development in rural areas, rural infrastructure and agricultural research, which normally do not attract private sector investment. While acknowledging the need for national ownership of policies, there is a need for increased national and international funding for rural employment generation targeted at productive sector development, taking into account overall national priorities. Aid flows under multi-annual budgets could also help mitigate employment impacts of external and exogenous shocks.

39. In light of the negative effects of agricultural trade distortions on local producers in developing countries, however, it is imperative that any international strategy towards employment generation in the agricultural sector should address, especially through the Doha round of trade negotiations, issues of agricultural trade, market access and reduction of trade barriers. This should also take fully into account the special needs of the least developed countries arising from preference erosion, price shifts and increased market competition. In addition, efforts are required to minimize the effects of fluctuations in commodity prices and terms of trade for agricultural commodities, which have been declining for developing countries by close to 50 per cent over the past 40 years.

VI. The role of small and medium enterprises and industrialization

40. Creating off-farm employment opportunities in rural areas while increasing agricultural productivity is indispensable, but it cannot substitute for a long-term strategy to create jobs, especially in urban areas, by means of sustainable industrial and modern service sector development, including information and communication technology and tourism. It is therefore important to ensure a balance between the needs of rural and other disadvantaged areas, where the majority of the poor live, and the need to ensure a sustainable urban industrial base. Industrialization has a critical role to play in helping developing countries to raise growth rates through industrial upgrading and productivity gains, and to generate sustainable employment and higher incomes to lift people out of poverty. Governments should therefore design effective industrial policies in areas of potential comparative advantage. To that end, they should create an enabling environment in terms of infrastructure requirements and access to support services if countries are to upgrade their productivity and to access new markets. Backward and forward production linkages can be particularly beneficial to the development of small and medium enterprises and, consequently, to employment generation.

41. Small and medium enterprises can be considered the springboard to a strong industrial sector. In most developing countries, however, more than 90 per cent of small and medium enterprises are microenterprises or small enterprises with less than 10 workers, most of them operating in an informal setting without legal recognition or registration. In fact, small enterprises remain the major providers of work to the increasing workforce. Decent work deficits in these mostly informally operating enterprises are particularly pervasive in terms of remuneration, security against income loss, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue.

42. Value addition by small enterprises operating in the informal economy remains low, largely owing to their inability to upgrade themselves in terms of business practices, technology and skills and thus benefit from market opportunities. In the short term, priority should be given to raising productivity and improving the wages and working conditions of those informally employed by providing access to affordable credit, exposure to information on markets and new technology, and by allowing the organization and representation of informal workers. Improved market access for informal producers and steps towards the recognition of de facto property rights by Governments are also vital steps in the transformation of the informal economy. Also, the community and its stakeholders should work with small enterprises and their workers in improving the infrastructure and living environment, which has a direct impact on working conditions, and in providing better social protection through various schemes.

43. In light of the large informal economy in many developing countries, particularly in Africa, serious considerations should be given to developing the institutional capacities necessary for gradually formalizing informal economies in order to extend the outreach of social protection and other benefits of decent work to all. Efficient and effective government is essential to encourage entrepreneurship, improve the access of workers to social protection and strengthen the supervisory system to ensure the observation of protection norms.

44. Women are generally over-represented in the informal economy and disproportionately active in the lower end of microenterprises with consequent low income owing to pervasive discrimination in labour markets. Considering the important contribution that women entrepreneurs can make to employment and the economic growth of their countries, there is a need to promote and support women's self-employment and the development of small enterprises, and the strengthening of women's access to finance, technology and training through the scaling up of institutions dedicated to promoting women's entrepreneurship, including non-traditional and mutual credit schemes, as well as innovative linkages with financial institutions. Particular efforts should also be made to involve women representatives of the informal economy in the policy process, with a view to formulating more appropriate regulations that take into account their need to balance productive and reproductive roles and responsibilities.

45. In most developing countries, the small and medium enterprise sector is affected by poor market access, scarcity of intermediate suppliers and fierce domestic competition. Therefore, in the presence of wide and persistent productivity differences with large firms, policies are needed that shift resources to the sector in order to make it more productive and remunerative with protection and rights for workers. To that end, it is essential to upgrade workers' and entrepreneurs' respective skills, taking fully into account demand in the labour market. Business practices should be modernized, and opportunities for networking and linkages should be facilitated. Public institutions, in collaboration with the private sector, should facilitate such opportunities. Direct assistance through business development services can also help correct major market failures and increase chances of survival for small and medium enterprises and opportunities for them to compete.

46. In addition there should be a credit market that functions for entrepreneurs, even to the most disenfranchised. Thus, consideration should be given to the creation of new types of financial intermediaries for small firms. Commercial banks

should be encouraged to lend to small and medium enterprises. Central banks and designated financial service regulators must play a proactive role in that regard, by integrating the objective of increasing access of small and medium enterprises to financial services into regulatory and supervisory policies.[5] Governments and central banks might also consider a set of special measures for small and medium enterprises, such as guarantee programmes, more user-friendly and transparent disclosure systems, and information technology-driven appraisal systems, to reduce the risk perceived by banks.

47. Competitive challenges pose a particular difficulty for small enterprises if they are acting alone to access the market served by larger enterprises as well. Hence, when they benefit from linkages to larger enterprises in terms of accessing the market, resources, or technology, globalization can present tremendous opportunities for small enterprises. To that end, the private sector, particularly the lead firms of global and national supply chains, should help their small and medium enterprise suppliers to upgrade in order to raise their value added content and to improve their level of quality and reliability in carrying out business activities. It is essential that Governments and institutions encourage and facilitate such mutually beneficial supply chain linkages by providing an inclusive industrial policy framework and by encouraging lead firms' participation in voluntary agreements. Respect for the 1998 International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work should be strengthened in all countries, as they provide a minimum set of rules for labour in the global economy.

48. Although supply chain linkages can provide opportunities for accessing markets and benefiting from economies of scale, there is need to ensure that small and medium enterprises are able to truly benefit from such linkages. Inter-firm cooperation, in the form of business clusters, can provide effective alternatives to supply chain linkages that can help small and medium enterprises to overcome their traditional weaknesses of isolation, and lack of economies of scale and scope. An institutional approach to mainstream the working poor in the dynamic growth trajectories of non-farm income is through upgrading of small and medium enterprise clusters. Policy interventions should thereby aim to revitalize clusters with high growth potential, transferring workers from moribund to modern clusters, or developing new competitive clusters.

49. Also, business relationships between informal entrepreneurs and small enterprises in the formal economy with further linkages to larger enterprises can help expanding informal actors' ability to access resources and markets. Small and medium enterprises in the informal economy can thereby gain legitimacy and formality in their business transactions. Such complementarities among small enterprises, both in the formal and informal setting, can be accomplished through alliance building in the form of trade associations, cooperatives or self-help groups for specific purposes.

[5] *Building Inclusive Financial Sectors for Development*, "Blue Book", United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and United Nations Capital Development Fund, 2006. Advance version available at www.uncdf.org/bluebook/.

VII. Impact on sustainable development

50. Sustainable development rests on three pillars — economic, social and environmental — and, to the extent that employment creation contributes to poverty reduction and economic prosperity, it clearly strengthens the first two pillars. With respect to the third, it has been argued that the pressure to sustain competitiveness, to which countries are being increasingly subjected, may prevent Governments from taking steps to internalize environmental costs and improve environmental performance if this entails higher costs for domestic producers. Employment creation and protection of the environment are not necessarily mutually exclusive objectives, however, and can often be made compatible. For instance, under certain conditions, eco-tax reform may be able to boost employment creation and environmental protection simultaneously — the so-called double dividend. The challenge is to develop policies for economic growth and poverty reduction that can absorb large numbers of workers, especially in resource-scarce areas, protect natural resources and are at the same time environmentally sound.

51. In industrialized countries, businesses are increasingly coming under pressure from consumers to improve the environmental characteristics of their products and processes. Consumer habits and demands have started to turn environmental excellence into new markets and a new factor of competitiveness among firms and products, and the same is true of environmental assessment of the entire product life cycle. Environmental performance is not just important for firms' marketing efforts, but has also become a relevant factor in capital markets, which can reward — or penalize — the environmental conduct of firms. The challenge now is to implement innovative strategies such as private voluntary initiatives to mainstream concerns about environmental quality, resource use, and social equity into consumption decisions along with prices. At the national level, macroeconomic policies, as well as sector-specific development policies, can encourage the emergence of new economic initiatives compatible with sustainable development — for example, through incentives promoting more sustainable consumption and production patterns. The encouragement of new non-polluting sectors, especially services and the production of environmentally friendly products, can contribute to converting economic activities towards job creation in environmentally sustainable sectors.

52. In that context, sustainable and organic farming, which are labour-intensive but not input-intensive are showing promise for rural poverty reduction in developing countries in view of the premium prices obtained for those products in advanced urban and developed country markets. The successful use of sustainable technologies, however, is also conditional on significant policy and institutional reforms that ensure equitable access to land, markets, credit, extension, education and infrastructure. Also, substantial trade barriers in developed markets exist, impeding on the achievement of that potential. The combination of fair trade, which guarantees higher revenues for small-scale producers in developing countries, and organic labelling, could offer further opportunities. At the same time, technical support in the area of testing and standards and in market development can enable producers using sustainable practices to be able to market their goods.

53. Insofar as foreign firms tend to employ cleaner technologies in their production processes, foreign direct investment may have positive implications for the environment. The recent wave of technological innovation, represented by new cleaner production technologies, low-emissions transport technologies, energy

efficiency technologies and renewable sources, and the new markets to which they have given rise, will be of particular importance in that regard. Measures should be taken to encourage the diffusion of new cleaner production processes and technologies from the lead firms through each country's production chains. While such measures would generate employment, they would also support the objectives of sustainable development. To that end, countries should make the introduction and diffusion of clean technology an integral part of trade and foreign direct investment strategies, combining environmental impact assessments for new investments with policies that promote environmentally sustainable consumption and production patterns. Providing financial assistance on softer terms to small enterprises to phase out polluting machinery and chemicals, and invest in more efficient and non-polluting technology or production processes should also be considered as a policy option. The establishment of cleaner production centres to disseminate information and promote local technological development and pilot projects in different sectors is another line of action that could be pursued towards those objectives.

54. For developing countries, research and development in ecological technologies, ecotourism, natural resource management, organic agriculture and infrastructure creation and maintenance provide opportunities for decent work that protect and restore the environment. Community-managed facilities favouring sustainable tourism are flourishing in many places, and countries such as Costa Rica have successfully developed a tourism industry with a reputation for sustainable development.

55. Also, the potential to shift away from non-renewable energy sources to renewable fuels based on labour-intensive agricultural production could have significant positive consequences for employment, especially in rural areas, while ensuring a sustainable development path. Brazil, for example, succeeded already in the 1970s in launching a major programme of sugar cane ethanol substitution for oil. Recently, it started a bio-diesel programme that has a good chance of rapid expansion. At present, ethanol, extracted from sugar cane grown on 1.8 million hectares, provides over 35 per cent of the country's automobile fuels. In that regard, application of various economic instruments on energy products in accordance with associated environmental damages could assist a shift to cleaner sources of energy. In designing taxes or other economic instruments, care should be taken to assess the overall welfare effect on different social groups and the impact on productive factors, bearing in mind interaction with other existing taxes.

56. An unremitting effort is needed to inform and educate all actors, so that the goals of employment generation within a sustainable development framework are a priority on the political agenda. The United Nations Global Compact, a voluntary corporate citizenship initiative, is an important step in that regard. Progress in meeting sustainable development goals can only be made if the public is informed and civil society is proactive in the pursuit of its right to live in a healthy environment and an economically prosperous and inclusive society. Social dialogue is an essential means of developing and implementing strategies which balance the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development at local, enterprise, national and global levels.

VIII. Conclusion

57. The present report has emphasized the urgent need to make decent work a global goal, a need fully recognized by the world community as a result of the outcome document of the World Summit in September 2005. In the light of large numbers of unemployed and an even larger number of "working poor", the double challenge is to increase both the rate of economic growth and the employment content of growth. The prevalence of working poverty in the developing world thereby underlines the importance of creating employment that is sufficiently productive to yield a decent income. For that reason, both employment and productivity growth must be jointly pursued. A strategy for increasing productivity and employment over the long run should therefore have two components: investing in the dynamically growing sectors of the economy, while building capacity in sectors where the majority of labour is employed, and establishing linkages between the two. In the context of globalization, countries should devise policies that enable them to pursue both economic efficiency and social security, allowing flexibility for firms and protection for workers. Social dialogue is instrumental for designing and implementing such flexibility-cum-security programmes and is necessary for raising acceptance to change.

58. To advance towards the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, the following framework should be pursued:

- **At the national level, Governments should make a political commitment to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all.**
- **Employment as a policy goal should be fully integrated into national development and growth strategies. To that end, Governments should work towards greater coherence between sectoral and macroeconomic policies and adopt integrated strategies for employment generation at national, regional and local levels.**
- **The goal of decent and productive work for all should be made a global objective and be pursued through coherent policies within the multilateral system in order to enhance macroeconomic and trade-related international cooperation and to arrive at a more balanced and coordinated strategy for sustainable global growth and full employment, including through greater market access, development assistance, technology transfer and support for development of institutional capacities, as well as an equitable sharing among countries of the responsibility for maintaining high levels of effective demand in the global economy.**
- **There is a need for continuing efforts towards and focus on the goal of creating decent employment. To that end, the Economic and Social Council may wish to consider launching a decade for full and productive employment and decent work for all.**

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Sustained economic growth for social development, including poverty eradication and hunger

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

By its decision 2005/221, the Economic and Social Council adopted "Sustained economic growth for social development, including poverty eradication and hunger" as the theme for its coordination segment in 2006. The present report of the Secretary-General highlights the growing recognition of the two-way relationship between economic growth and social development. That relationship forms an important element of the global development vision emerging from the United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s, the Millennium Summit and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The report focuses on various approaches that have been pursued to follow that vision.

The report provides an overview of the current trends and the lessons learned so far. On the basis of those trends, the report draws a number of conclusions. Some of the conclusions are: (a) countries need to adopt comprehensive, coherent and participatory policy approaches to the achievement of sustained economic growth and social development; (b) policy approaches should be designed to respond to the needs of each country; (c) there is a need to create an enabling international environment through greater policy coherence; (d) there is a need to ensure greater United Nations system-wide programme coherence and integration; and (e) there is a need to bridge the intellectual gap on the dynamic effects of specific economic and social policies through the pursuit of a comprehensive research agenda.

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The report also makes a number of recommendations, which emphasize the principle of national ownership and policy space in the formulation of effective implementation strategies; the need for building countries' capacity to be able to develop such strategies; the importance of participatory approaches; the need for the international community to harmonize and align their efforts with national development strategies; the need for the United Nations system to build further on its efforts to shift from a sectoral to a more comprehensive approach; and a call for a major research initiative to better understand the complex linkages between sustained economic growth and social development.

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I. A comprehensive vision for pursuing economic and social goals

1. There is growing recognition of the two-way relationship between economic growth and social development. Economic growth is not an end in itself but the means to yield certain social goals, including poverty eradication, that are, in turn, the basis for its sustainability. Similarly, accumulation of human capital, which is largely achieved by the realization of social goals in the area of health, education, employment and eradication of poverty and hunger, is a key component of policies to ensure sustained economic growth. Hence, the question of equity and social development is central to sustaining economic growth over the long term.

2. To address that question, major United Nations global conferences and summits, particularly the World Summit for Social Development, held in 1995, provided a comprehensive vision. The Social Summit reaffirmed the importance of the social dimension and poverty eradication. It viewed social development as a means to achieve greater equity within societies. The Summit called for the adoption of an integrated framework of socio-economic strategies in order to achieve the goals of poverty eradication, generation of productive employment and social integration. There were repeated calls for the implementation of that vision. Most recently, the 2005 World Summit Outcome reiterated the unambiguous commitment of Member States to the implementation of the development vision that emerged from the United Nations conferences and summits.

3. That clear consensus on principles and objectives, however, is not yet fully reflected in current policies and strategies. There is still an ongoing debate on the most effective approach to achieve the objectives. A variety of approaches, at times competing, are being pursued by various development actors. The linkages between macroeconomic and social policies and their combined impact on poverty and development are still being explored in their many dimensions. Current studies have led to different lines of arguments and prescriptions for development strategies.

A. Policy debate and approaches

4. Economic growth has been considered fundamental for the accumulation of human and physical capital, which in turn forms the basis for long-term economic growth. In that framework, macroeconomic stability has also been considered necessary to bring about sustained economic growth. Most poverty reduction measures, therefore, have pursued growth and stability as the two main objectives. The positive relationship between economic growth, social development and poverty eradication, however, does not come about automatically.

5. The experience of the 1980s and 1990s indicated that economic growth alone was not sufficient to improve the lives of the poor. Increases in average income did not automatically benefit all members of society and were not associated with improvements in health and educational attainment, essential to reduce chronic poverty. Structural adjustment macroeconomic policies carried out in the 1980s and 1990s subsequently adopted social safety nets and targeted social programmes to mitigate the negative effects of economic growth reforms. Those efforts, although useful, never fully compensated for the high social costs of structural adjustment reforms and lack of institutional capacity in those countries in which they were

adopted. One of the main reasons for the painful adjustments in macroeconomic policies during the 1980s and the more recent crises in the developing world was the lack of consistency between the economic and social goals established by the authorities.[1] That highlighted the fact that social policies could not be just an afterthought or add-on to macroeconomic reforms or growth policies.

6. The need to bring the social dimension more explicitly, consistently and effectively into the discussion of structural adjustment and macroeconomic policy design for the formulation of more effective national poverty reduction and development strategies spurred the current economic development debate.

7. Currently, macroeconomic policies, aimed at stabilizing, sustaining or enhancing economic growth, and social policies, aimed at reducing poverty and inequality as well as increasing human assets, are often formulated rather distinctly from one another. Incorporating the social dimensions in macroeconomic policy decisions is complex and might entail numerous trade-offs, especially in the short term, for example, between the need to increase fiscal expenditures for the social sector to take care of different social needs, and the degree of vigorousness to pursue macroeconomic stability.

8. Two main lines of argument have emerged from that debate: the debate on pro-poor growth and the human development approach. Both assume that although economic growth and social development are complementary in the long run, they might have competing priorities in the short run. The two approaches, however, express different perceptions of the potential policy complementarities and trade-offs and come to different conclusions on how to prioritize and sequence policies that would allow economic growth to reduce the incidence of poverty more effectively and sustainably.

B. Debate on pro-poor growth

9. The notion of pro-poor growth arose from the recognition that growth alone would not automatically bring about poverty reduction unless specific measures were adopted to link growth to the poor. But it led to the debate on the definition of what constitutes pro-poor growth and the modalities to measure it.

10. There are two broad approaches to pro-poor growth: one is based on the relative concept of inequality and defines pro-poor growth as growth that reduces inequality through redistribution; the other focuses solely on the link between poverty and growth, defining growth as pro-poor if it reduces absolute poverty (by increasing the overall income).[2] The first approach views pro-poor growth in terms of changes in the share of poor households in total income (distribution of income).Within the later approach, there are different understandings of what would measure pro-poor gains in terms of increases in the share of poor in per capita growth. One view defines pro-poor growth as growth that results in some increases in the incomes of the poor, however small.[3] Another view defines growth as pro-poor growth when the percentage increase in the income of the poor is no less, on average, than that of the non-poor.[4] In other words, the share of the poor in the proceeds of growth should be no less than their initial share in income, which is by definition relatively small. Both definitions assume that maximizing the increases in incomes of the poor requires growth, excluding the possibility that increases in such incomes could conceivably be best achieved in some contexts through policies that

entail negative growth, with substantial redistribution.[5] A third view defines pro-poor growth as growth that increases the incomes of the poor by a share greater than average in the additional income generated by growth in absolute terms. That definition implies that the incomes of the poor should grow much faster in percentage terms than those of the rich[6] and it is equivalent to the first approach, which focuses on income distribution.

11. There are three main lines of inquiries concerned with the factors affecting poverty reduction. The first line explores the linkage among poverty, growth and inequality, thus suggesting that a poverty reduction strategy should focus on both growth and the pattern of growth; the second stream analyses whether there is a trade-off between reducing inequality and improving growth, or whether there is a "virtuous" circle in which growth leads to less inequality; and the third focuses on the linkages between socio-economic policies and their combined effects on growth, inequalities and poverty reduction. Various ongoing studies concentrate on these issues, with the aim to define an analytical and policy framework that would be more likely to bring about pro-poor growth, but no common approach has yet emerged. A review of cross-country studies[7] indicated a positive correlation between growth and poverty reduction but no correlation between growth and changes in inequality. The review also showed that growth accompanied by progressive distributional change increased growth effectiveness to reduce poverty.

C. Human development approach

12. The human development approach builds on the two-way relationship between economic growth and social development understood as leading to either a mutually reinforcing upward spiral of sustained growth and development or to a downward spiral of social inequality, unsustainable growth and poverty. The approach emphasizes that the positive performance of such a relationship depends on the primacy of human development as an objective of development, where human development is both a primary goal and a prerequisite for sustainable growth and development.[8]

13. To pursue that approach, social expenditures should be pursued simultaneously with economic growth policies, as a way to achieving advances early on in various dimensions of basic well-being. Those advances, such as better health, nutrition and education, lift people from poverty and enhance their capabilities, creativity and labour productivity, which are main determinants of growth and its sustainability. A more equal distribution of those capabilities tends to favour higher rates of growth and poverty eradication.

14. In that approach, social policies that have the greatest impact on poverty may not necessarily be those that are pro-poor in the strictest terms, but rather those focused on development in the broad sense, ranging from human capacity development, employment generation, social protection and equality, democratic participation and collective decision-making.

15. The impact of human development on the achievement of the overall objectives of sustained economic growth, social development, and poverty eradication might be weakened by factors such as the initial accumulation and distribution of assets, social expenditure, quality of institutions and investment rates. Those may be some of the reasons why some countries that had adopted a

human development approach succeeded and others failed at generating sustained rates of growth and development. It is not enough to create a larger pool of educated people. There must also be opportunities for them to be productively employed or the number of unemployed will simply increase. Labour opportunities, in turn, might depend on factors as varied as the structure of the economy, existence of labour rules that encourage job creation, reform of banking and property regulation that encourage lending, political stability, impact of globalization on markets, economic activities and social cohesion.[9]

16. The success of pursuing one of those two approaches depends on a variety of factors that are unique to each national situation and that require a comprehensive and coherent set of policies. There is no "one-size-fits-all" formula applicable to all countries under all circumstances. The ownership and consistency of national policies is crucial to account effectively for all the relevant factors. The right formula is unique to each country and might be the result of multiple trade-offs.

II. Trends: an overview

17. The varied country and regional experiences largely indicate that countries that were successful in escaping the poverty trap and achieving high economic growth and development were those that consistently promoted equitable growth and investment in human development, especially education and training. They also focused on labour market regulation as a central element of macroeconomic regulation and carried out economic reforms aimed at diversifying the economy and promoting employment and export growth. Most of those countries also enjoyed a long period of political stability and democratic accountability. Yet, there were many other political, social and cultural factors, such as the level of political stability, the presence of conflicts, the level of social and economic integration, institutional strength and the incidence of HIV/AIDS that accounted for the development outcome of various countries.

18. Countries that focused primarily on economic growth and macroeconomic stability, with few notable exceptions ended up consistently with massive inequalities in their societies, less ability to withstand economic and other crises, and a tendency towards an overall poor economic and social performance. Emphasis on narrowly defined macroeconomic stability, structural reforms, privatization and reduced state intervention characterized the policies of many of those countries. Even though they generally experienced improved growth indicators, reduced current-account deficits and improved public finances owing to the restructuring and privatization of the public sector, per capita real income continued to fall and poverty remained persistently high, especially among the most vulnerable groups of society, while human development indicators continued to perform poorly. The high level of poverty and income inequality were due to large initial income gaps; growth concentrated in capital and skill intensive sectors; inadequate opportunities for the poor to improve their human capital; and weak social protection programmes. Those countries were particularly vulnerable to economic and other crises, as the economic downturn of the 1990s demonstrated, which aggravated the situation of poverty and inequality of many of those countries.

19. Countries that were successful in implementing a human development approach were also those that adopted a broad range of policies to create an

enabling environment for equitable and sustainable growth, social cohesion and political stability. The implementation of targeted policies supporting educational, training and vocational institutions, which led to rapid skill development and accumulation beyond basic education in many countries, were generally accompanied by consistent policies to increase employment opportunities for all social groups, including through economic diversification and social inclusion in policy decision-making. An inclusive political environment, in turn, allowed many countries to maintain consistently high social expenditures and high investment rates. Moreover, policy continuity in promoting equitable growth and investment in human capital contributed to the creation of a favourable economic atmosphere for attracting foreign investment essential for technology and skill transfer to domestic businesses, increase access to international markets by local firms and for domestic capital formation.

20. In many of those cases, Governments played a leading role in emphasizing human resources development as the primary instrument to achieve equitable growth and maintaining policy consistency and economic and social integration. While Governments established policies and provided funds, a key factor for success was the involvement of employers, unions, academia, the private sector and multinational companies in the formulation and implementation of those policies that ensured that the needs of the industry were met and facilitated adequate technology and skill transfer.

21. Despite the focus on human development and sustained growth, other countries did not manage to reduce poverty and inequality. Even if they performed well in terms of human development indicators — i.e., life expectancy, literacy and fertility rates — among the low income countries, they could not prevent a further widening of the income gap during the previous decade, especially between urban and rural areas. That considerably minimized the poverty-reducing benefits of economic growth in the 1990s and led to social disintegration. In some countries that was due partly to a combination of prolonged civil conflict, uneven industrial development among regions caused by skewed economic policies, limited land ownership that hindered equitable rural development, lack of diversification of the economy that created excessive dependence on agriculture and greater vulnerability to external shocks, and lack of regional dynamics favourable to trade expansion. In many cases, lack of political stability and policy continuity failed to attract the foreign direct investment necessary to help sustain economic growth. In some countries, HIV/AIDS featured high among the impairing factors.

Lessons learned

22. From various country experiences and the ongoing analytical work, the following major lessons can be drawn. They are in no way exhaustive. However, the list has been kept short to keep the report focused on the broad contours of the debate and practices.

23. First, consistency of policies with macroeconomic stability, understood in the broad sense — including not only fiscal sustainability and lower levels of inflation, but also stability in economic growth and in external accounts, as well as sound domestic financial and external balance sheets — is necessary to achieve development objectives, but not sufficient, for better social performance. The conflict, however, is not between social policy, on the one hand, and

macroeconomic stability and consistency on the other, but between macroeconomic inconsistency and long-term priorities. Many of the structural targets formulated during the period of economic reforms in the developing world lacked clear social dimensions or even had negative implications, particularly when they were aimed at reducing the size of the State at the cost of sacrificing social policy.[10]

24. Second, the relationship between sustained economic growth and social development for poverty eradication and hunger is complex. It goes beyond the realm of economic and social policymaking and includes factors like the institutional structure, cultural underpinnings, policy and decision-making processes, political and security situation. Social and economic goals, therefore, need to be pursued through comprehensive, coherent and country-specific development strategies.

25. Third, there is no universal approach that provides an effective analytical and policy framework to account for all factors that might affect national economic and social issues and for their policy implications. The approach has to be developed at the country level and it has to be tailored to the specific needs of a country.

26. Fourth, the effectiveness of the approach to bring about social cohesion, equity and sustainable growth is largely determined by the quality, capacity, transparency and accountability of institutions. Those institutions affect Governments' ability to ensure that public investments link the poor to growth. Accountability and the existence of clearly established rights and obligations are also necessary conditions for the effectiveness of those policies. Effective and creative solutions to national problems are more likely to emerge from policymaking processes based on social dialogue and social integration through which broad national needs can be expressed and taken into account. That can also help to ensure policy coherence and coordination at the national level. However, countries need to build the capacity to carry out broad-based consultations and to deal with the broad range of issues involved in the process.

27. Fifth, the overall international economic environment should be supportive of the national policies to pursue economic growth and poverty eradication. External shocks like fluctuations in commodity prices or pressures generated by rapid trade and financial liberalization could undermine social policies and in some cases reverse the gains made in poverty eradication. That is increasingly so in a rapidly globalizing world economy. Hence, the need for greater policy coherence and coordination at the global level.

28. Finally, it seems that existing policymaking mechanisms, institutions and actors, at the national and international levels, lack the scope and comprehensiveness to deal with that agenda and to support the emergence of country-specific solutions to national problems. Hence, there is a clear need to promote interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder mechanisms to foster better understanding of the impact of socio-economic policies on the two-way relationships between sustained economic growth and social development, and its impact on poverty and hunger. This leaves an important and comprehensive research agenda to be carried out if the dynamic effects of specific policies are to be appropriately understood and addressed.

III. International development cooperation to promote sustained economic growth for social development: trends and evolving approaches

29. In the 1980s and 1990s policies, including structural adjustment macroeconomic policies, focused on economic stability and growth, adopting social safety nets and targeted social programmes as a subsequent measure to mitigate the negative effects of economic reforms. That approach of adding social policies as an afterthought did not address social problems adequately and did not improve the situation of the poor. The debate on poverty in the 1990s recognized the negative impact of the structural adjustment approach. The poverty reduction strategy approach has made some progress to develop a more integrated strategy to include the economic and social dimensions under one policy umbrella.

30. The shift from the Structural Adjustment Programme to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in the late 1990s indicates that those institutions have recognized the need to develop a broader perspective. IMF accordingly substituted the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility with the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility. The intention was to include social development consideration in the overall poverty reduction strategy. The two main objectives of the PRGF, however, remain growth and stability, as in the previous structural adjustment programmes. That assumes that poverty reduction will follow, even though it is recognized that without explicit policies promoting economic and social inclusion, empowerment and social investment, growth and stability would not necessarily result in poverty reduction. The World Bank Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA) and Country Social Analysis are intended to ensure that the social dimension is addressed more comprehensively in the PRSPs.

31. Regional financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) have also supported initiatives to promote social inclusion and the human capital of the poor as necessary conditions for reducing poverty and inequality. The IDB has created strong linkages between poverty reduction and social equity promotion by incorporating poverty eradication programmes within the institution's social development activities.

32. In addition to those trends, the global development vision emerging from the United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s, the Millennium Summit and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, promotes a positive upward spiral between economic growth and social development. Such vision acknowledges the need for greater coherence and consistency in the various policy realms pursued by the international community. In particular, the Monterrey Consensus has endorsed the principle that international development assistance should be guided by national priorities. Such consensus, however, has not yet translated into donor practices that are less prescriptive and more aligned with the national priorities and strategies on the basis of commonly agreed benchmarks of progress.

33. The adoption of the Rome Declaration on Harmonization in 2003 and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 is indicative of a shift of major donors towards greater country ownership of development cooperation efforts. In the Paris Declaration, the participants, both developed and developing countries, agreed to increasingly align aid with the priorities, systems and procedures of developing

countries. The view that national ownership leads to greater impact on the development process is central to the Paris Declaration, as well as the need to manage by results. In particular, signatories agreed that in determining the most effective modalities of aid delivery, they would be guided by development strategies and priorities established by developing countries (Paris Declaration). While that is certainly an encouraging trend among donors, it would be more useful to have those agreements within the fold of multilateral discussions on development cooperation. That is likely to lead to broader ownership of those efforts and greater synchronization with the work of the United Nations in that area.

34. The Monterrey Consensus also called for greater coherence, consistency and coordination in global policies that have a direct or indirect impact on financing for development. This is a recognition that not only aid policies but also polices in the areas of trade, investment, external debt and governance should support the overall development goals. While some progress has been made in pursuing that goal, there are still areas in which policies contradict each other. Moreover, national development strategies or policy frameworks, in certain cases, are undermined by policy conditionalities imposed by donors.

United Nations system

35. While the United Nations system has always advocated and pursued programmes/projects that are meant to promote the welfare of human beings, including through eradication of poverty and hunger, its activities have been quite diverse. The fragmentation of approaches was also due to the lack of a common vision, which has now been generated by the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits. Since 2003, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) has given high priority to the elaboration of the system's collective contribution to the implementation of the United Nations development agenda by: (a) enhancing inter-agency policy exchange and information sharing at the inter-agency level on key issues concerned with the relationships among poverty reduction, growth and equity, such as: conditions for a sustained process of poverty reduction; links between economic policies and the social Millennium Development Goals; the combination of broad-based capital formation with social protection and specific anti-poverty programmes; and policies for addressing inequalities; and by (b) promoting system-wide technical assistance to help countries integrate the Millennium Development Goals and other priority objectives into their policy frameworks.[11] Such efforts, however, are still far from a comprehensive support of the United Nations system to the integration of the Millennium Development Goals in the PRS process.

36. Programmatic coherence within the system has been pursued through the promotion of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and the use of instruments such as the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) has adopted a set of measures to put national development plans at the centre of United Nations country programming and has recently initiated a Millennium Development Goal-oriented approach to PRSs to ensure the integration of social objectives and to facilitate synergies between different sectors. An increasing number of United Nations country teams have helped national partners to place the Millennium Development Goals within their PRSs, linking the common country assessment and UNDAF to

those strategies. It is, however, too early to trace in the PRSs clear links to Millennium Development Goal-based results and poverty outcomes. UNDP has also initiated the Poverty Strategies Initiative, a multi-donor programme aimed at incorporating the Millennium Development Goals and sometimes the broader framework of the internationally agreed development goals into national development strategies.

37. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, is focusing on policy development and analytical work around a few strategic objectives to strengthen the linkages between the normative and operational work of the United Nations system, including through close collaboration with UNDG and CEB. That work taps into the analytical expertise and contribution of the regional commissions and many non-resident agencies and aims at supporting country processes in translating the United Nations normative work, as defined by the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, into national development priorities and strategies for their implementation.

38. The organizations of the United Nations system are promoting other sector-specific projects and programmes in an effort to inject a Millennium Development Goal perspective into the PRSs or to support the formulation of national development strategies, as endorsed by the 2005 World Summit Outcome. For example, FAO promotes pro-poor growth through targeted policies aimed at promoting growth of agriculture and rural economy to reduce poverty and hunger. Such policies are based on an integrated approach. In addition, FAO, IFAD and WFP have been coordinating their strategies in partnership for a twin track approach to hunger and poverty reduction, which was proposed in Monterrey 2002. The approach combines short-term targeted assistance, such as food aid and water control, with long-term investments aimed at sustainable growth, including improved infrastructure, sound natural resource management, increased access to jobs, education, land, water, credit, social services and organizations for the poor.

39. The ILO approach to poverty eradication is formulated around the framework of decent and productive work. In its assistance to PRSs, it stresses pro-poor growth, focusing on changes in institutions, laws, regulations and practices that create and perpetuate poverty. ILO has also initiated a pilot programme of cooperation with the Governments and social partners of a few countries to support the development of a decent work component in poverty reduction strategies. The major strength of ILO is that it can provide a method for engaging social partners in participatory processes. ILO is also carrying out Decent Work Pilot Programmes in a few countries. One of the objectives of the programme is to study how decent work contributes to poverty eradication in practice.

40. UNCTAD promotes growth-oriented macroeconomic policies, sectorally focused productive development policies, export promotion policies and policies to ensure that marginalization within least developed countries does not occur as economic growth takes place. Productive sectors, notably agriculture and economic infrastructure, which have both been relatively neglected through declining aid flows, are likely to receive greater attention in the type of poverty reduction strategy advocated by UNCTAD. It has also advocated that the best way to move beyond structural adjustment is by anchoring poverty reduction strategies in long-term development strategies.

41. UNICEF takes a rights-based approach to poverty reduction and focuses on social integration policies aimed at enhancing access of the poor to nutrition, health, water and sanitation, resources and knowledge necessary to attain employment, social protection and other policies which promote social integration of marginalized populations.

42. UNAIDS facilitates the inclusive and country-driven process to support existing national AIDS strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reversing the spread of the epidemic by 2015.

43. Despite efforts by the organizations of the United Nations system to rally around the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, there are still visible gaps in supporting the efforts of Governments, building synergies among their own activities, synchronizing their work and in prioritizing their activities. Among other things, the system capacity to deliver is also constrained by the lack of sufficient resources and lack of sufficient flexibility of United Nations organizations to adjust their programming cycles.

Lessons learned

44. The broad overview of international trends regarding efforts to pursue social and economic goals in a mutually reinforcing manner points to the following lessons.

45. First, despite the efforts to translate the global agreement on a development vision into strategies for action, the PRS approach remains largely donor-led and focused on policy conditionalities. There is a need to ensure that countries have sufficient national policy space, which is essential for adopting a nationally developed and owned strategy.

46. Second, there is a lack of policy coherence and coordination in international development cooperation and policies; one sphere tends to contradict or impede policy objectives in another. That is a reflection of different policy processes involving different economic and social development actors. As a result, current poverty reduction strategies or poverty reduction strategy papers are far from aligning fully with the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as expressed by national priorities. The risk of the current trend of competing policy approaches is to maintain the existing juxtaposition between competing claims of macroeconomic and social considerations without offering a valid framework to decide among them.

United Nations system

47. Firstly, the organizations of the United Nations system need to build further on their efforts and pursue a more coherent and integrated approach within the United Nations system and with other partners to support the Millennium Development Goals — and other internationally agreed development goals — based policy approaches. That would also require significant changes in the way United Nations development cooperation is programmed and funded.

48. Secondly, there is a need to maintain consistency among different sector-specific projects and programmes within a country development framework and exploit synergies and complementarities among those programmes. Donor preferences for social spending have put some organizations of the United Nations

system under pressure to demonstrate results in the social sector instead of seeking to support longer-term government action to integrate separate strategies into a single operational framework for poverty reduction.

49. Thirdly, CEB and UNDG efforts to promote system-wide approaches to integrate the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, into the overall work of the United Nations system organizations, particularly in their support to the national development strategies, need to be pursued further. CEB can play an important role in ensuring that internationally agreed development goals are part of the PRSs and PRSPs.

50. Finally, the capacity of the organizations to deliver is also constrained by the lack of sufficient resources or increasing reliance on non-core resources, which tend to focus on specific sectors, weaken policy coherence and spur competition for resources.

IV. Conclusions

51. Considering the degree of varied views on what are the appropriate macroeconomic policies to reduce poverty most effectively, the present report does not focus on the academic discussions that surround the theme. Instead, the focus is on the practices and international trends in pursuing the goals and what inferences could be drawn from those trends. For that reason, the conclusions are largely based on the lessons learned and the process of policy development that the United Nations has undertaken through its series of conferences and summits.

52. They fall into five broad areas. Firstly, countries need to adopt a comprehensive approach for achieving the goals of sustained economic growth and social development, including eradication of poverty and hunger. Such an approach should be tailored to the needs of each country, which assumes a fair degree of State capacity, institutional structures and accountability as well as authority and legitimacy over the territory, fiscal space and capacity to engage effectively in participatory processes for policymaking and to involve all relevant stakeholders. That approach needs to be translated into a national development strategy, based on the internationally agreed development goals, as nationally prioritized.

53. Secondly, there is a need to create an enabling international environment through greater coherence and consistency in the policies that have direct or indirect implications for the development prospects of developing countries. That also includes full implementation of the commitments made in the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits.

54. Thirdly, international development cooperation should be geared towards supporting the national efforts of countries to develop national development strategies to pursue development goals, as suited to their national situations. In that regard, international financial institutions and donor policies need to be more supportive of national needs and efforts to achieve those goals.

55. Fourthly, the United Nations system needs to become more coherent and integrated in the formulation of its programmes and projects. Fragmentation seems to be minimizing the impact of the efforts of the United Nations organizations to make the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as the central plank of their activities. The governing bodies of

the various United Nations organizations should promote greater system-wide programming coherence and flexibility in programming cycles and country-level activity calendars of their organizations for improved alignment with the national instruments of recipient countries. The United Nations system also needs to have more resources to channel its overall expertise in its operations and undertake activities that are required to support national development strategies and implementation efforts, as agreed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

56. Finally, there is a clear need to pursue a comprehensive research agenda if the dynamic effects of specific economic and social policies are to be appropriately understood and addressed. That intellectual gap needs to be bridged through joint efforts and continuous research.

V. Recommendations

57. The recommendations listed below are made regarding the theme of the current coordination segment.

A. National level

1. Countries should develop comprehensive approaches to pursue social development and sustained economic growth, including eradication of poverty and hunger. Such approaches should be country-specific and nationally owned and should be at the foundation of the national development strategies that the countries have committed to adopt and begin to implement during 2006.

2. Countries should build capacity for designing these strategies and for evaluating their impact, promote transparency and accountability of institutions and ensure that policymaking processes are based on social dialogue and social inclusion. They should strengthen the national budget process, while promoting participatory processes.

3. Countries should promote policy coherence and coordination in order to ensure that policies in various sectors are mutually supportive and are geared towards the achievement of development goals.

B. International level

4. Concrete steps should be taken to create an enabling international economic environment that is supportive of the national policies to pursue economic growth and poverty eradication and that promotes coherence and coordination of policies in the areas that directly or indirectly impact the development prospects of developing countries.

5. The international development community should promote more equal and participatory partnership with developing countries that would allow for greater policy space and national solutions to developing countries' socio-economic challenges. The development community should adopt more upstream aid methodologies for budget support, where accountability is linked to agreed results as articulated in country-owned development plans.

6. The development community, particularly donor countries, should take further steps to harmonize and align their efforts with national development strategies and priorities in accordance with the development agenda endorsed by United Nations summits and conferences and should support country efforts to strengthen their government institutions and increase national absorptive capacity. That requires minimizing policy conditionalities and focusing on results so that the dialogue on policies and accountability issues can shift from donors to national stakeholders.

7. Donors should find ways to help developing countries to strengthen their analytical and policymaking capacity and to contribute to the formulation of a more comprehensive, integrated and country-driven policy approach for the implementation of national development strategies. The Paris Declaration is a step in the right direction. Efforts should be made to extend that initiative beyond the signatories to the Declaration, including through multilateral forums.

C. United Nations system

8. The United Nations system should build further on its efforts to shift from a sectoral and fragmented approach to a more comprehensive and integrated approach in order to mobilize its full expertise in support of the national development strategies and facilitate the integration of the economic and social dimensions in those strategies.

9. The organizations of the United Nations system should continue to strengthen their focus on country ownership and priorities and adapt their development lessons to the country-specific context. The organizations of the United Nations system should further adapt and harmonize financing instruments to ensure better donor coordination and development assistance focused on results and development effectiveness.

10. The United Nations Development Group should continue to promote multi-stakeholder policy dialogues at the national and regional levels, including, ministries of health, education and labour and relevant United Nations agencies, with the objective of building national and regional capacity to develop a multidisciplinary approach to economic and social issues.

11. The Economic and Social Council may wish to promote multidisciplinary debates and research work on economic and social policies in order to better understand the economic and social impact of policy reforms and promote the development of more integrated institutional arrangements for policy analysis, formulation and implementation in the economic and social fields. In that regard, the Council may call for a major research initiative by the organizations of the United Nations system, especially the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, to better understand the complex linkages between sustained economic growth and the achievement of social development goals.

Notes

[1] Ocampo, José Antonio, "Market, Social Cohesion, and Democracy", DESA Working Paper No. 9 (ST/ESA/2006/DWP/9), February 2006.

[2] See, for example, United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID), Pro-Poor Growth Briefing Note 1, February 2004.

[3] Ravallion, Martin and S. Chen (2003); "Measuring Pro-Poor Growth", Economic Letters, 78(1), 93-99.

[4] 2000 World Development Report, World Bank.

[5] Woodward, David and Andrew Simms, "Growth is Failing the Poor: The Unbalanced Distribution of the Benefits and Costs of Global Economic Growth", DESA Working Paper No. 20, March 2006.

[6] White, H. and A. Anderson (2001); "Growth versus Redistribution: Does the Pattern of Growth Matter?", DfID white paper on Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalization Work for the Poor"; Nanak Kakwani and Hyun H. Son, "Evaluating Targeting Efficiency of Government Programmes: International Comparison", DESA Working Paper No. 13 (ST/ESA/2006/DWP/13), February 2006.

[7] Lopez, J. Humberto, "Pro-poor growth: a review of what we know (and of what we don't)", the World Bank, September 2004.

[8] Ranis, Gustav and Frances Stewart, "Dynamic Links between Economy and Human Development", DESA Working Paper No. 8, November 2005 (ST/ESA/2005/DWP/8).

[9] *Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its first session (26-30 April 1999)*. "Vulnerability and poverty in a global economy" (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.II.A.5), p. 15.

[10] Ocampo, José Antonio, "Market, Social Cohesion, and Democracy", DESA Working Paper No. 9 (ST/ESA/2006/DWP/9), February 2006.

[11] See the CEB report entitled "One United Nations: Catalyst for Progress and Change — How the Millennium Declaration is changing the way the United Nations system works" (2005).

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Economic and environmental questions: cartography

Report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the work of its twenty-third session

(Vienna, 28 March-4 April 2006)

Summary

The twenty-third session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, convened in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2004/303 of 23 July 2004, was held at United Nations Office at Vienna from 28 March to 4 April 2006.

The present report describes the activities carried at by the session, and presents the major findings of the Group of Experts with a primary focus on the importance of its work in supporting the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the essential contribution it continues to provide to Member States in the geographical information field, particularly in the context of natural-disaster preparedness and responding to humanitarian needs.

* E/2006/100.

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I. Terms of reference

1. In pursuance of Economic and Social Council decision 2004/303 of 23 July 2004, the Secretary-General invited the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) to convene its twenty-third session in Vienna from 28 March to 4 April 2006.

II. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 250 participants from 67 countries, representing 21 of the 22 geographic/linguistic divisions of the Group of Experts. Twenty-five observers were present. The provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Group of Experts is contained in the annex to the present document. The list of documents and the list of participants are issued in a separate document (GEGN/23/INF/1).

III. Officers of the session

3. The officers of the twenty-third session were:

Chairperson:
Helen Kerfoot

Vice-Chairpersons:
Brahim Atoui
Jörn Sievers

Rapporteurs:
Brian Goodchild
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

For the names of the Chairpersons of the divisions, see UNGEGN website (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegndivisions.htm). The officers of the working groups were:

Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Convenor:
Ferjan Ormeling

Rapporteur:
Isolde Hausner

Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Convenor:
Randall Flynn

Rapporteur:
Trent Palmer

Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

Convenor:
Naftali Kadmon

Rapporteur:
Ferjan Ormeling

Working Group on Romanization Systems

Convenor:
Peeter Päll

Rapporteur:
Caroline Burgess

Working Group on Country Names

Convenor:
Leo Dillon

Rapporteur:
Randall Flynn

Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Convenor:
David Munro

Rapporteur:
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

Convenor:
Ki-Suk Lee

Rapporteur:
Botolv Helleland

Working Group on Exonyms

Convenor:
Peter Jordan

Rapporteur:
David Blair

Working Group on Pronunciation

Convenor:
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Rapporteur:
Isolde Hausner

Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names

Convenor:
William Watt

Rapporteur:
Brian Goodchild

IV. Opening of the session

4. The twenty-third session of the Group of Experts was opened on 28 March 2006. The Chairperson, Helen Kerfoot (Canada), opened the session and welcomed the experts.

5. The Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made an introductory statement. He spoke of standardization issues and trends, particularly the relevance of geographical names to the Geographic Information System (GIS), mapping and statistical data collection, and referred to the key role of geographical names in spatial data infrastructure. He also drew attention to the Statistics Division's support for geographical names through publications and training courses.

V. Adoption of the agenda

6. The provisional agenda (GEGN/23/1) was adopted without change as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report of the Chairperson.
4. Report of the secretariat of the Group of Experts.
5. Reports of the divisions.
6. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations.
7. Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy.
8. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.
9. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology.
10. Activities relating to the Working Group on Romanization Systems.
11. Activities relating to the Working Group on Country Names.
12. Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.
13. Activities relating to the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation.
14. Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms.
15. Activities relating to the Working Group on Pronunciation.
16. Activities relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names.
17. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
18. Other toponymic issues.
19. Implementation of resolutions and aims and functions of the Group of Experts.

20. Preparation for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

21. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Group of Experts.

22. Adoption of the report.

VI. Report of the Chairperson

7. The Chairperson presented her report (GEGN/23/10), recalling the first meeting of the Group of Experts in 1960, and drew attention to the significant changes in communication media that had taken place since then. She spoke of the importance of geographical names as an essential element of cultural identity and especially the importance of standardized names in geo-referenced information systems, in order to provide reliable data for persons addressing, for instance, humanitarian and environmental issues. She then referred to the work undertaken since the last session of the Group of Experts, in particular the activities of working groups and divisions, and the cooperation with the UNGEGN secretariat. The Chairperson provided summaries of the current information that UNGEGN had available on contacts for geographical names authorities in Member States (WP.2 and WP.3) and requested additions and corrections.

VII. Report of the secretariat of the Group of Experts

8. The secretariat of the Group of Experts provided a summary of the major activities it had carried out during the period 2004-2005 (GEGN/23/11). The English version of a basic manual on national standardization of geographical names had been published; translations of the manual, as well as a technical reference manual, would be published shortly. The UNGEGN website had been maintained and support given to four toponymic training courses. The secretariat had initiated the design of a database on country and major city names. Other comments referred to participation in the activities of working groups and the need for integrating geographical names data into national and regional spatial data infrastructures.

VIII. Reports of the divisions

9. The Chairperson commented on discussions at the twenty-second session of UNGEGN with respect to country and divisional reports. There was no agenda item at UNGEGN sessions for individual country reports, and these should be presented under the banner of the respective divisions.

A. Africa South Division

10. The Division presented working paper No. 15, which referred to the countries in the Division and provided an outline of toponymic activities in four of them, Botswana, Madagascar, Mozambique and South Africa. Of note was the work in defining localities in Mozambique and the production of a 10-minute promotional video on South Africa.

B. United States of America-Canada Division

11. The report of the Division, working paper No. 20, summarized the collaborative work of the names boards, particularly the meetings held and the work undertaken on policies and procedures in geographical naming. A draft version of the new "Principles, Policies and Procedures" of the United States Board on Geographic Names was on the Internet, but was not yet finally approved. Attention was drawn to the redesign of the databases of the United States and Canada. The Chairperson also commented on cooperation with Mexico in the production of small-scale maps of North America using official toponyms.

C. French-speaking Division

12. The Division's working paper No. 21 reported on the database of exonyms, website maintenance, finance for divisional activities from the International Agency of la Francophonie, a training course on toponymy and a Web-based bulletin. The report acknowledged the significant work done by Daniel Hazard for the Division.

D. United Kingdom Division

13. Working paper No. 25, presented by the Division, provided information on the Ordnance Survey (the national mapping agency of Great Britain), including the development of an electronic version of its place names gazetteer. The paper also reported on the Ordnance Survey's activity in the standardization of Welsh names in Wales and Gaelic names in the Gaelic-speaking areas in Scotland in cooperation with the Gaelic Names Liaison Committee. The Division also welcomed the participation of Jamaica, and an expert from Jamaica commented on standardization in that country.

E. Baltic Division

14. Working paper No. 30, presented by the Division, provided a comprehensive report on its activities, including divisional meetings, cooperation and its website, and also addressed various issues of standardization in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, including gazetteers, data files and exonyms.

F. Norden Division

15. Working paper No. 47 presented a comprehensive report of meetings of the Division since the twenty-second session of UNGEGN and noted the participation at meetings of representatives from Greenland (Denmark) for the first time. The working paper also reported on Nordic cooperation on Saami names, and on geographical names activities in Iceland and Norway.

G. China Division

16. Working paper No. 64, presented by the Division, noted the creation of a great number of new geographical names in China each year, and reported on a project to provide improved services on geographical names to the public, which included standardization of geographical names, provision of standard geographical name signs and toponymic information through websites and other electronic means.

H. Dutch- and German-speaking Division

17. Working Paper No. 68 reported on the activities within the Division with emphasis on the promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names, joint meetings of divisions and working groups, a Europe-wide geographical names data infrastructure (EuroGeoNames), geographical names as cultural heritage, support for training and publications, gazetteers and toponymic data files. The Chairperson commented favourably on the format of the report, which was aligned with resolutions of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

I. Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division

18. Working paper No. 80 provided information on activities relating to geographical names standardization in the member countries of the Division, including names authorities, national standardization, romanization, exonyms, toponymic databases and gazetteers.

J. East Central and South-East Europe Division

19. Working paper No. 85, presented by the Division, provided information on divisional meetings and on activities within member countries, including names authorities, national standardization, minority group and indigenous geographical names, toponymic databases and gazetteers, exonyms, romanization and country names. The more detailed reports of Hungary, Poland and Ukraine were attached to the working paper.

K. Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division

20. Working paper No. 87 reported on meetings of the Division in New York in 2004 and in Brunei Darussalam in 2005, and on toponymic training courses held in Bathurst, Australia, in 2004 and in Malang, Indonesia, in 2005. Other activities of the Division included work on indigenous and minority group geographical names, the regional map and the divisional gazetteer.

L. Asia East Division (other than China)

21. Working paper No. 93 reported the activities of the Division. Experts within the Division expressed different views on the choice and use of the name of the

body of water separating the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago. The Chairperson encouraged bilateral and multilateral efforts to find a solution acceptable to all.

M. Africa East Division

22. Working paper No. 96 of the Division reported on a toponymic training course held in the Sudan, the establishment of the National Council for Geographical Names in the Sudan, and on cooperation between the Sudan and neighbouring States in names standardization. The working paper drew attention to the difficulty of making contact with member countries of the Division. The Chairperson encouraged other divisions to assist the Africa East Division in carrying out its functions.

23. The report of the Sudan, working paper No. 74, drew attention to linguistic issues in that country. Reference was made to the National Committee of 1978, which had become a Council. A database of 70,000 names had been developed, a website was to be developed and a draft law had been prepared (see conference room paper No. 8 for the English-language version of the working paper).

N. Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)

24. Working paper No. 59 of the Division reported on the work of the Expert Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including activities on transcription, a database and website, historical names, terminology and exonyms. The working paper also gave information about the third national conference and exhibition on standardization of geographical names held at the National Cartographic Centre of Iran.

25. A report from Turkey, working paper No. 26, provided background information on measures to standardize geographical names in Turkey and the Board of Experts for Geographical Names of Turkey (BEGeoN-T). The expert also advised that the UNGEGN brochure had now been published in Turkish.

O. Latin America Division

26. Conference room paper No. 9 provided information on the work of the Division, including activities on national standardization, toponymic data files and guides, and exonyms in Chile, Spain and Mexico. Work had been carried out jointly by the Division to construct a website and to develop a document on the names of countries and their capitals.

P. Arabic Division

27. Conference room paper No. 10 presented by the Division reported on its meeting on geographical names held in Tripoli in 2004. Topics covered included romanization, an official gazetteer, geographical terminology, a database of Arabic geographical names and cooperation between Arab States. The paper also reported on activities in member countries, which included websites, software development and romanization.

Q. Romano-Hellenic Division

28. Conference room paper No. 11, presented by the Division, reported on efforts to encourage countries that had not done so to participate in activities of the Division and noted the request of Andorra to become a member. The paper also reported on a Division meeting held in Greece at which a number of issues were discussed, including toponymic data files and websites, exonyms and a multilingual glossary.

R. Other papers

29. The following papers were distributed, but not presented: working paper No. 4 (submitted by the Latin America Division — Mexico); working paper No. 86 (submitted by the Norden Division — Norway); working paper No. 88 (submitted by the Arabic Division — Algeria); working paper No. 89 (submitted by the Asia South-East, Pacific South-West Division — Thailand); working paper No. 97 (submitted by the French-speaking Division — Andorra); conference room paper No. 7 (submitted by the Asia East Division (other than China) — Republic of Korea); conference room paper No. 13 (submitted by the Arabic Division — Jordan); conference room paper No. 17 (submitted by the Asia South-East, Pacific South-West Division — Malaysia); conference room paper No. 19 (submitted by the Latin America Division — Argentina).

IX. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations

Pan American Institute of Geography and History

30. The liaison officer presented an oral report indicating that the Institute considered applied toponymy to be a major focus of its work and that the training courses it ran was the practical application of that work. It also had a long-established involvement with the work of UNGEGN.

Council of Geographic Names Authorities

31. Working paper No. 18 provided details regarding the origins and purpose of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA). It also reported on the two most recent meetings of COGNA, in Jacksonville, Florida, United States of America, in 2004 and Portland, Oregon, in 2005. Items of interest included defining the footprints, or geometry, of named physical features and the geocoding of addresses. More recently, the focus had been on the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) and its future development and maintenance.

Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

32. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 53. Antarctic place names appeared in 15 or more languages and five scripts. The composite gazetteer of geographical names for Antarctica, which had been published in 1998 and was available on the Internet, was updated quarterly and as of 1 January 2006 there were 35,551 name entries assigned to 17,887 different geographical features.

International Council of Onomastic Sciences

33. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 70, which referred to the International Congress of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) held in Pisa, Italy, in 2005. Papers from the Congress were not available on the Internet as they were to be published. The working paper provided details about the members of the Board of ICOS and noted that the next Congress would be held in Toronto, Canada, in August 2008.

International Hydrographic Organization

34. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 91 on the activities of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) with respect to geographical names. The principal liaison activity concerned undersea feature-naming and the work of the Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN). A recent result of the work of SCUFN was the inclusion of 34 new names in the GEBCO[1] gazetteer. Reference was also made to IHO publication S-23, *Limits of Oceans and Seas*, published in 1953, which was available on the IHO website. A fourth edition of the publication was in preparation.

Other meetings

35. The representative for the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division presented conference room paper No. 5 on the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Inter-state Council for Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Remote Control of the Earth established by the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The paper referred to meetings of the Working Group and its primary functions, including details of Bulletins it had published.

International Cartographic Association

36. A brief oral report was given by the liaison officer, referring to the twenty-second Conference of the Association, held in Spain in 2005, and the planned twenty-third Conference to be held in Moscow in August 2007. Two sessions on toponymy had been held at the twenty-second Conference and similar time would be allocated in Moscow. The Association had also developed a Web-based training course in toponymy (http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/).

International Organization for Standardization

37. The liaison officer for Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) indicated that the next meeting would be held in Florida in May 2006. Details on liaison with ISO would be covered under the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.

International Geographical Union

38. A representative of the International Geographical Union (IGU) presented a report (conference room paper No. 16), which referred to the interest of IGU in geographical names and pointed out the significance of those names with respect to

[1] General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans, a joint IHO-IOC (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) project.

research in geography and history. IGU was seeking to collaborate further with UNGEGN.

X. Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

39. In working paper No. 41, the Convenor of the Working Group emphasized the value of toponymic training courses. Since 1982, at least one course had been held each year and a collection of manuals had been built up (see http://toponymycourses.geo.uu.nl). Since the twenty-second session of UNGEGN, international workshops or training courses in toponymy had been held in Panama City, Maputo, Bathurst, Australia, Malang, Indonesia, Santo Domingo and Vienna, as well as in China, Jordan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

40. Information was provided on two national training courses:

(a) "*Introduction à la gestion toponymique*" offered at l'Université Laval, Québec, Canada;

(b) "Researching aboriginal placenames" offered by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy in Sydney, Australia, in conjunction with the New South Wales Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre.

41. An expert from the China Division reported on a programme of training courses for geographical names and city planning in China. The objectives of the course were to improve city name planning, as more than 20,000 new urban names appeared in China every year. A course had been held in 2005, attended by about 400 people.

42. An expert from the Norden Division mentioned that a special issue of the ICOS journal, *Onoma*, devoted to the teaching of onomastics, would be published in 2006.

43. The liaison officer with the Pan American Institute for Geography and History (PAIGH) presented working paper No. 17, indicating that PAIGH had sponsored two training courses in applied toponymy, the sixteenth in 2004 in the Dominican Republic and the seventeenth in 2005 in Panama. The latest course introduced new concepts of data collection and database maintenance in support of an integrated, seamless national digital map series. The next PAIGH training course was scheduled for 2006.

44. Working paper No. 24 described a United Nations-supported toponymic training course for Southern Africa held in 2004 in Maputo, organized by the Chair of the Africa South Division. The objectives of the course were to understand the importance of standardized geographical names for various applications, the process of standardization, the necessity of names authorities, the collection and dissemination of names and the promotion of cooperation and training course opportunities between divisions of UNGEGN. The next toponymic training course for Southern Africa was planned for September 2006 in Maputo.

45. Oral summaries were presented of two other United Nations-supported training courses organized by:

(a) The Asia Pacific Institute for Toponymy and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board in Bathurst, Australia, in 2004. A CD-ROM had been produced with the teaching material of the course;

(b) The Indonesian National Coordinating Agency for Surveying and Mapping (BAKOSURTANAL) in Malang in 2005. Course materials had been made available to all experts in paper and CD-ROM versions.

46. Conference room paper No. 15, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, reported on a training course in toponymy held prior to the present UNGEGN session in Vienna. The course, organized by the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Federal Office for Metrology and Surveying, was aimed especially at toponymists from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. A CD-ROM with the teaching material of the course had been produced.

47. Working paper No. 36 described a three-day workshop organized in Ottawa, Canada, by the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Heritage Trust in 2005. The course was attended by some 20 researchers who discussed field collection and cartographic representation of locally used geographical names and who made three recommendations: creation of a technical working group, holding an Inuktitut terminology workshop, and creation of a Nunavut cultural map series on a 1:250,000 base.

48. The Convenor of the Working Group thanked the UNGEGN secretariat for having made available the Manual for standardization of geographical names, which had been distributed to all experts at the session.

49. While discussing working paper No. 39, experts from the French-speaking Division demonstrated the prototype of an Internet-based toponymy course for a French-speaking audience. The site would be hosted by the Commission de toponymie du Québec (Canada), and was accessible from the website of the French-speaking Division (http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/Formation/index.htm).

50. The Convenor referred to the work of the Commission on Education and Training (CET) of the International Cartographic Association (ICA) in creating a web-based cartography course. The initial stages of the toponymy module were demonstrated; the complete module was expected to be available in August 2007 (http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/).

XI. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

51. A representative of the East Central and South-East Europe Division presented working papers Nos. 10 and 11 detailing toponymic work in Poland. The first paper reported that part three of the national toponymic guide, addressing the technical treatment of place names in cartographic applications, had been published in 2005. The second paper reported on the first phase of the compilation of a national gazetteer focused on the collection, standardization and publication of hydronyms.

52. Working paper No. 13 of the Latin America Division reported on the development of the Brazilian Geographic Names Database. The project, begun in 1977, had lately been revitalized in recognition of the need to ensure consistent use

of geographical names. A Brazilian gazetteer was an anticipated outcome of the project.

53. A representative of the United States of America-Canada Division presented working paper No. 19 providing an update on the United States Geographic Names Information System. Recent enhancements included the availability of some geometric boundaries, new Internet services, and Web applications that allowed partnerships with all levels of Government and other certified authorities for data maintenance.

54. Working paper No. 23 of the East Central and South-East Europe Division presented information about the World Gazetteer in Ukrainian. The background, organization and content of the publication were presented.

55. An update on the Canadian Geographical Names Service (CGNS) was given by the representative of the United States of America-Canada Division in working paper No. 32. Improved name search functions and a user's guide had been added to the site. CGNS would eventually replace the Canadian Geographical Names database. Additional future enhancements were discussed.

56. A presentation by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) expressed the necessity of a global toponymic database and gazetteer to address urgent humanitarian needs. The recent earthquake in Pakistan had provided the case study illustrating the need for such information. UNGEGN was urged to cooperate by making data available.

57. A summary of the information available at the Geographical Names of Canada website was described in working paper No. 33. The query by name was the most popular feature of the site. Future plans included the addition of historical information, educational materials, enhanced search capabilities and digital availability of *Canoma*, the magazine of the Geographical Names Board of Canada.

58. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported in working papers Nos. 49 and 50 on two activities relating to the EuroGeoNames (EGN) project. The former addressed the planned EGN infrastructure and services, which were to be a network of distributed databases. The latter related the details of a recently conducted geographical names survey/inventory.

59. Working paper No. 51 presented by a representative of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, reported on a project involving the collection of names in the German coastal area taken primarily from products of the federal hydrographic authority.

60. The Asia East Division (other than China) reported in working paper No. 56 that an effort was under way in Japan to create a database of geographical names by administrative district. The intent was to capture the changes that had occurred in the past 100 years and to make the data available to allow the analysis and understanding of the geographical names history of Japan.

61. The National Geographical Names Database of the Islamic Republic of Iran was described by the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) in working paper No. 60. The expert outlined the background to the database's creation and reported on its current status. Some 30,000 names had thus far been entered and data entry was continuing. The structure of the database was also described.

62. Working paper No. 65, presented by the China Division, described developments by the Government of China to enhance the promulgation and promotion of geographical names by means of several innovative technological means including telephone hotlines, websites and public kiosks. In a related issue, working paper No. 66 discussed the standards and structure employed by the Government of China in the development of the software for its geographical names database.

63. In working paper No. 69, the Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported on the Digital City Map of Vienna project. The background, nature and utility of the product were described. It was reported that the digital map had proven to be the most important planning tool for the city.

64. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division, in working paper No. 71, presented a summary of the 2001 Gazetteer of Austria. The Gazetteer had been published following a national census. Information on the data presentation and availability of the product was provided.

65. Working paper No. 77, presented by the Latin America Division, provided details on the new Concise Gazetteer being compiled by the National Geographical Institute of Spain. Efforts were also under way to compile a model gazetteer for Spain. A comparison of the format and content of the two products was delineated. The Concise Gazetteer was the first step in the compilation of a national gazetteer.

66. The East Central and South-East Europe Division presented working paper No. 84 on the creation of GEONAMES, the digital geographical names database for the Czech Republic. The database had been fully populated in 2005 and could be ordered online.

67. Working paper No. 90, presented by the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division, described the draft map showing toponyms (endonyms) for the entire area covered by the Division. The product was to be available, when complete, in PDF and ESRI ArcReader formats. The project was commended as an example of divisional cooperation.

68. The Africa South Division, in working paper No. 100, presented a summary of the name standardization activities in South Africa since 2000. Name change statistics were categorized by language and province. A table of town name changes of general interest was included.

69. Conference room paper No. 1 from the Asia East Division (other than China) provided a status report on the geographical name standardization efforts in the Republic of Korea. Standardization guidelines had been published and 160,000 names had been processed. However, the standardization process was not yet considered final.

70. The Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division presented conference room paper No. 3 to inform the session of the Russian Federation database of official name changes; the federal mandate for this work was explained. An information bulletin had been published in 2005 which compiled the name changes that had occurred from 1998 to 2005 and it was anticipated that an updated bulletin would be issued every six months.

71. Conference room paper No. 4, also by the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division, provided an update on the State Catalogue of Geographical

Names in the Russian Federation. The categories of data presented were enumerated and samples of the catalogue were included. The project's first phase of entering names, based on small-scale cartographic products from the past card index was expected to be completed next year. Preliminary work on the second phase had begun.

72. The Arabic Division, in conference room paper No. 12, presented an overview of the gazetteer of geographical names for Lebanon, including the application of romanization rules. The presentation detailed the mapping and geographic history of Lebanon and concluded with information on the newly available gazetteer and digital map of the country, which evidenced the application of romanization rules to be endorsed by the League of Arab States.

73. Conference room paper No. 14, submitted by the Arabic Division, described the Geographic Names Index of Jordan. The Index had been completed in 2004 and contained over 10,000 names from the 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 topographic maps of the country and was available on CD-ROM.

74. The Convenor of the Working Group presented the Working Group's report, working paper No. 99, to conclude the agenda item. The Group had not met during the previous two years and no progress had been made on the workplan as set forth at the Eighth Conference in 2002. The Convenor stressed that the Working Group could not remain inactive, and highlighted a few items on which action was needed. They included activation of liaison relationships with the Unicode Consortium, with ISO Technical Committee 211 and with the Open Geospatial Consortium. Additional efforts should pursue collaboration with the NATO Interservice Geographic Working Group and possible compilation of a handbook on toponymic databases for use by UNGEGN.

XII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

75. The Convenor of the Working Group presented its report, working paper No. 7, which provided a brief history of the Working Group and of the Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names prepared by the Working Group and published by the UNGEGN secretariat in 2002. The paper listed the terms which should now come under consideration by the Working Group.

76. The experts discussed some of the definitions of terms proposed in working paper No. 7, for example, oronym, toponymisation, ethnonym, limnonym and lacustrine name. With a view to further refinement and finalization of the definitions, the experts referred these and other terms included in the report to the Working Group for informal discussions.

77. In the absence of an expert from the Africa Central Division, the Convenor remarked that working paper No. 43 dealt with individual toponyms in Gabon and did not come under the agenda item under discussion.

78. The Convenor presented working paper No. 5, which showed how definitions of the terms exonym, endonym, standardized endonym and traditional name had evolved over time. There was a discussion concerning the currently accepted definitions of those terms and the new definitions proposed by the Working Group

on Exonyms. Discussion focused on the principle of exclusivity of the terms, on the interpretation of "official" and "well-established" language and on the general applicability of the definitions. It was recommended that members of the two Working Groups (Terminology and Exonyms) should meet for further discussion on the definition of those terms.

XIII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Romanization Systems

79. The Convenor of the Working Group emphasized that its main task was to consider romanization systems proposed by national authorities and intended for adoption as United Nations systems. The prerequisites for the adoption of such systems were outlined.

80. In working paper No. 98, the Convenor detailed the composition of the Working Group, reported on activities since 2004 and provided updated information regarding a number of romanization systems. Details of all the systems were on the Working Group's website: http://www.eki.ee/wgrs.

81. The Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) presented working paper No. 62 on transcription procedures for Iranian toponyms. Three principal procedures had been studied by the Transcription Working Group of the Specialist Committee for the Romanization and Standardization of Geographical Names of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which were detailed in the paper. Some technical details were clarified through discussion.

82. The romanization of Korean was examined in working paper No. 95, presented by the East Asia Division (other than China). The paper highlighted the differences between the McCune-Reischauer system of romanization and the system recently adopted by the Republic of Korea. The paper also noted that discussions on a common approach to the Korean language had been taking place between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.

83. The Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division reported in conference room paper No. 6 that the system adopted by the United Nations for the romanization of Russian Cyrillic, GOST-83, continued to be used for geographical names in the Russian Federation. A number of publications illustrating its application were listed in the paper. The expert from the Division explained that other romanization standards existed which were used in texts and for personal names.

84. Romanization issues affected many elements of the work of the Group of Experts and the Convenor stressed the importance of continued collaboration between those national authorities dealing with romanization and the Working Group.

XIV. Activities relating to the Working Group on Country Names

85. The Convenor of the Working Group presented working paper No. 16 and summarized the progress made by the Working Group since the last session of the Group of Experts. The Working Group had met in November 2005 in Lefkada,

Greece, to review the latest draft revision of the List of Country Names (E/CONF.94/CRP.11) of the Eighth Conference. Several changes in the format and content of the document had been proposed, including in the nature of a section entitled "Names used by a national authority", which provided references to country names used within Member States that differed from those included in United Nations Terminology Bulletin No. 347.

86. Working paper No. 40 comprised the latest version of the draft List of Country Names. The Convenor summarized the changes in format, and noted that more than 80 country entries had been updated. It was noted that information contained in the "National Official" section of each entry had been gathered by the Working Group through a survey of national authorities in order to establish national official country names currently in use. The Convenor urged experts to review the draft list and to provide corrections to the Working Group. He stressed that information contained in the "UN Official" section of each entry was under the authority of the Terminology and Reference Section of the United Nations Translation and Editorial Division. Requests for change of official United Nations names must be submitted there.

87. Working paper No. 8 from the East Central and South-East Europe Division described the Polish publication *Nazwy państw* (*Country Names*), issued in 2006 and providing in Polish a list of the names of independent countries of the world.

88. Working paper No. 58 from the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) described activities undertaken by the Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names of the Islamic Republic of Iran to compile a list of country names based on the list in the United Nations Terminology Bulletin. The list was approved by the Committee in March 2005, and would be published and posted on the Committee's website.

89. Working paper No. 79, presented by the Latin America Division, made reference to the list of names of countries of the world used by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain, and highlighted a list of differences between the country names used in Spain and those used by the United Nations.

90. Working paper No. 81 from the French-speaking Division outlined the work accomplished in 2005 to harmonize the country names used by various government organizations in France.

91. The Convenor noted that nationally compiled lists of country names were useful to the activity of the Working Group. He again stressed the need to review the draft List of Country Names and to submit corrections to the Working Group or the Terminology and Reference Section, as appropriate.

XV. Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

92. The Convenor of the Working Group presented the working paper No. 27, the report of the Working Group. He outlined the revised mandate of the Working Group and noted that three meetings had taken place since the twenty-second session.

93. The Convenor reported on activities relating to publicity, including:

(a) A toponymy session, which had attracted extensive media coverage, at the thirtieth International Geographical Congress, held in Glasgow, Scotland in 2004;

(b) Various ways in which experts had promoted geographical names through publications, public lectures and conference papers;

(c) Turkish- and German-language versions of the UNGEGN publicity brochure Consistent Use of Place Names. The procedure for publishing the brochure in other languages was summarized.

94. The Convenor encouraged experts to develop their own geographical names websites and to create links with the UNGEGN website. In future, a paper would be produced outlining the steps involved in creating a geographical names website.

95. The Convenor reported that a new promotional leaflet aimed at GIS and mapping organizations in developing countries and a press kit for use by experts and the media were being prepared for publication in 2006 or 2007.

96. The Convenor suggested that funding for training courses and publications scheduled for 2008/09 and requiring funding from the United Nations might require the adoption of a resolution by the Ninth United Nations Conference, as done at the Eighth Conference in 2002.

97. In working paper No. 28, the Convenor provided guidelines to assist experts in identifying alternative sources of funding. He noted that collaborative partnerships with other organizations were recommended, and were illustrated by some of the working papers presented at the present Session. Discussion ensued regarding the location of future sessions and conferences, and on funding for participants in the context of affording greater accessibility to those from developing countries.

98. In working paper No. 52, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, further information was provided on the German-language version of the UNGEGN brochure, which was now downloadable from the Internet.

99. A Swedish publication on the work of UNGEGN was presented in working paper No. 1. It described, in Swedish, various aspects of the Group's activities since its inception, with an English summary of each chapter. Copies of the publication were distributed at the session.

100. Conference room paper No. 18, presented by the Africa South Division, took the form of a short video produced to provide the public with a better understanding of the work of standardizing geographical names in South Africa and of the role of the South African Geographical Names Council. Copies of the video were made available to participants at the session.

XVI. Activities relating to the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

101. The Convenor of the Working Group introduced its activities, briefly outlining its aims and objectives, before presenting the report of the Working Group, working paper No. 94. He reported on the results of the last meeting, which had taken place

in Seoul in November 2005, a joint meeting with the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.

102. Working paper No. 101, presented by the Africa South Division, identified challenges facing the recently established Provincial Geographical Names Committees (PGNCs) in South Africa. It stressed financial and organizational capacity-building issues. The expert explained that the PGNCs did not have a decision-making mandate, but made recommendations to the South African National Names Council.

XVII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms

103. The Convenor of the Working Group summarized its terms of reference and presented working paper No. 67, which outlined past and planned activities of the Group. The fourth meeting of the Working Group had been held in Ljubljana in 2005. A major outcome was a resolution to accept revised definitions of the terms exonym and endonym and to present those definitions to the present session and to the Working Group on Terminology. The Convenor noted that those definitions had now been accepted, at a joint meeting of the two Working Groups. Publication of a book on exonyms, consisting of papers presented at previous meetings of the Working Group, was expected soon.

104. An expert from the East Central and South-East Europe Division presented working paper No. 9, which outlined the work of the Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names outside Poland in standardizing Polish exonyms. The expert noted in particular that the Commission had needed to include in its list toponyms that did not fall within the existing standard definition of exonym (and which had led the Working Group to recommend revised definitions of both exonym and endonym).

105. An expert from the French-speaking Division presented working paper No. 38, summarizing work on "La base de données des exonymes de la langue française" (Database of French-language exonyms). This database of exonyms was primarily intended for Francophone users requiring reliable information on geographical names. The expert confirmed that the database had previously been referred to as "Bougainville".

106. An expert from the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) summarized working paper No. 61, which outlined the history of the name Persian Gulf. The Convenor recognized the careful historical content of the paper and noted that countries could not be prohibited from using or creating exonyms.

107. An expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 73, which summarized recent research on the difficulty experienced by editors in choosing between exonyms and endonyms for use in their publications. The research presented a decision-support system for editors in such circumstances, based on clearly defined criteria.

108. An expert from the East Central and South-East Europe Division outlined the rationale for, and the structure of, the List of Czech Exonyms. The List, which was described, including examples, in working paper No. 83, was intended for publication in mid-2006.

XVIII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Pronunciation

109. Working paper No. 92, presented by the Convenor of the Working Group, reported on a meeting of the Working Group held during the twenty-second session of UNGEGN in New York in 2004. The Convenor reported that the Working Group had held a meeting during the current session and had agreed to hold a further meeting in the first half of 2007. He stated that the Working Group's workplan would focus on such issues as national pronunciation tables of geographical names and the provision of the pronunciation element for the planned UNGEGN Web-accessible toponymic database (the only pronunciation guide supplied to date had been for Hebrew).

110. Working paper No. 6, presented by the East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic), outlined the need for national pronunciation guides and presented recommendations for the preparation of such guides for English speakers. During the discussion, the issue of the written representation of pronunciation was raised, in particular the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Experts accepted the need for pronunciation guides for lists of individual names and recognized the advantages of Web-accessible audio pronunciation guides for geographical names.

111. Working paper No. 37, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on three websites in Canada that included an audio pronunciation guide for some indigenous geographical names, and noted the cultural value of those and similar sites.

XIX. Activities relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names

112. Working paper No. 82, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on the collection and dissemination of indigenous names in the United States of America. The paper referred to the United States policy of univocity and variant names and on the ongoing work with indigenous communities, such as the Coeur d'Alene project. Two projects had been undertaken and many names made official, but as many as 300 more projects might be required. Appropriate generic terms were usually added to indigenous names for clarity of maps and other references.

113. Working paper No. 34, presented by the French-speaking Division, reported on the work done in Québec to record, preserve and disseminate indigenous names. The paper outlined what had been done in Québec and the ongoing programmes. Six publications on indigenous names had been published by the Commission de toponymie du Québec.

114. An expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 42, the report of Geonames 2005, the International Conference on Indigenous Names/Minority Names and Multilingual Areas, held in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, in April 2005. The proceedings of the Conference and the conference papers had now been published.

115. Working paper No. 44, presented by the Norden Division, was a report on the supplementary field collection of Saami names in Finland.

116. Working paper No. 54, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division provided a status report on the promotion of minority and indigenous geographical names in Germany. It recorded that there were four official minority languages in Germany, although geographical names were used in only two of them — Sorbian and Frisian.

117. Working paper No. 63, presented by the China Division, reported on the protection of the geographical names culture in China. China had a long and rich history, preserved in the culture of its geographical names, and had a project to record, preserve and promote those names through television documentaries, painting and calligraphy. China was also working to record and preserve the names of alleys and byways in Beijing.

118. Working paper No. 72, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, provided information on measures taken to record and preserve endonymic minority names of all categories in the Province of Burgenland, Austria.

119. Working paper No. 102, presented by the Convenor of the Working Group, described the Working Group's plans, including the task of recording and reporting on work undertaken in the promotion of indigenous and minority group names by geographical names authorities. A template for input by names authorities had been prepared, and would be distributed through the UNGEGN secretariat. Contributions from authorities were invited for inclusion in the report to be prepared for the Ninth Conference.

XX. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors

120. The Chairperson, in introducing the agenda item, referred to the foundational work of Josef Breu of Austria, former UNGEGN Chair, in the late 1970s, and encouraged experts to examine the exhibition of his life and work that had been set up outside the conference room.

121. Working paper No. 46, presented by the Norden Division, reported on the updating of the toponymic guidelines of Finland. This was the fourth revised edition of the guidelines, which were available through a link on the UNGEGN website.

122. Working paper No. 57, presented by the Asia East Division (other than China), reported on the current version of the toponymic guidelines for Japan, which replaced the 1994 guidelines. They would be available on the Internet in the near future.

123. A representative from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 76, which was a major revision of the Austrian toponymic guidelines, available online at www.oeaw.ac.at/dinamlex/AKO/AKO_Toponymic_Guidelines.html.

124. In responding to requests of experts, the Chairperson said that website addresses that appeared in documents of the session could be reproduced in a separate document after the session and made available by the secretariat on the UNGEGN website.

125. The Latin America Division presented working paper No. 78, toponymic guidelines for Spain. These new guidelines had been published and would also be available on the Internet, in Spanish only.

126. The current coordinator of toponymic guidelines from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, Isolde Hausner, emphasized the importance of producing full or partial guidelines for a country. She referred experts to chapter IX of Part two of the new Manual for the national standardization of geographical names for both details of the content of the guidelines and a table of those produced since 1975.

XXI. Other toponymic issues

127. Working paper No. 12, presented by the Latin America Division, reported on the standardization of names in Mexico. Mexico had now developed technical standards for the standardization and field collection of geographical names, including indigenous names.

128. Working paper No. 22, presented by the representative of Mongolia, provided background information on aspects of Mongolian geographical names and the need for their preservation. The current romanization system being used for Mongolian was that of the United Kingdom Permanent Committee on Geographical Names; United States Board on Geographic Names; it would take time for Mongolia to develop its own system, and continued cooperation with the Working Group on Romanization Systems was recommended.

129. Working paper No. 31, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on possible research topics to be undertaken by the Geographical Names Board of Canada's Advisory Committee on Nomenclature, Policy and Research. The paper listed a number of topics of importance to Canada. Comments and other suggestions from international experts were requested by 15 April 2006.

130. Working paper No. 48, submitted by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, addressed the subdivision of Europe into large regions based on cultural criteria. It described the process and noted that it was being reviewed for publication.

131. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 75, which provided details of the transposition of the Austrian mapping system into the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) system map-sheets on the scales of 1:50,000 and 1:200,000.

Task team on Africa: panel discussion

132. The Vice-Chairperson of UNGEGN, Brahim Atoui, remarked in his opening statement as moderator that the purpose of the discussion was to explore ways to improve the participation of African countries in geographical names standardization and the activities of UNGEGN. The panel followed up the initiative of the task team created at the twenty-second session to help African countries. He noted that, apart from countries in northern and southern Africa, few African countries had participated in the work of UNGEGN and that those countries were most in need of standardizing geographical names.

133. The Secretary-General of the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS) outlined the activities of that body, reporting that it had been established in 1988, had a current membership of 24 countries throughout Africa and was affiliated with the African Union. AOCRS, the organization in charge of coordinating cartographic and remote-sensing activities in Africa, gave

priority to geographical names activities and helped in the organization of training courses in toponymy.

134. Representatives from the Arabic Division, the Africa East Division, the Africa South Division, Africa West Division and the French-speaking Division contributed to the discussion, stressing the need to raise awareness of the importance of national standardization of geographical names in poorer countries in Africa and the need for setting up national committees to undertake this work. They noted that training was a fundamental requirement and that there was a need for both financial assistance and cooperation between divisions in order to achieve this. The Secretary-General of ICA said that in response to the decline in capacity-building in cartography, ICA had established an initiative, "Africa for Africa", to help African countries.

135. In conclusion, the Vice-Chairperson remarked that there was a need for AOCRS and ICA to work together in the interest of standardizing geographical names in Africa, and for AOCRS in particular to raise awareness of the necessity of national structures to be established to that end. He thanked the French-speaking Division for its offer to help with fellowships for trainees.

Presentation of UNGEGN database by the UNGEGN secretariat

136. The UNGEGN secretariat gave a presentation on the proposed development of a database of city and country names. He outlined the background, data modelling and building process of the database, and also referred to future prospects. The proposed steps included capturing country names, names of major cities with populations of over 100,000, United Nations Geographical Information Working Group (UNGIWG) international boundaries, and possibly an audio file for endonyms. A prototype was currently being prepared.

Presentation by the Norden Division

137. Johnny Andersen, an expert from the Division, made a presentation on the digital environment for geographical names. The presentation referred to the digital map system of the past and the structured digital dataset of the future, and provided an example of a database model.

Presentation by Olaf Østensen, Chairman, ISO Technical Committee 211.

138. Olaf Østensen gave a presentation on the work of ISO Technical Committee 211 and the issues relating to geographical names. He spoke of the role and experience of ISO and the participation of UNGEGN in the development of the Committee's standards. He concluded by referring to ISO standard 19112 and the toponymic framework, the composite model and the toponymic service on the Web.

XXII. Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts

139. The Chairperson referred experts to documents GEGN/23/8, the resolutions adopted at the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, and GEGN/23/9, the list of resolutions adopted at the Eighth Conference. These resolutions are available on the UNGEGN website. She noted

that UNGEGN had to report to the Ninth Conference on the implementation of the resolutions.

140. Working paper No. 29, presented by the Norden Division, referred to resolution 2 of the Eighth Conference regarding commemorative naming. It reported on a questionnaire prepared by an expert from Sweden which had been circulated to UNGEGN members. Twenty-two replies had been received representing diverging opinions and problems encountered with commemorative naming.

141. Working paper No. 35, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on commemorative naming guidelines recently adopted in Canada. The guidelines were a useful model for other authorities.

142. Working paper No. 45, on commemorative naming practices in Helsinki, was presented by the Norden Division. It reported on commemorating individuals, companies and communities in Helsinki, and included the principles adopted by the Place Names Committee of the City of Helsinki.

143. The Norden Division presented working paper No. 14, a report on geographical names in various languages. The paper reported on endonyms and exonyms and issues regarding diacritics and transcription, and gave some examples from a Norwegian encyclopaedia.

144. An expert from the Norden Division, Botolv Helleland, had been asked by the Chairperson to provide an overview of the work reported concerning resolution VIII/9 referring to cultural aspects of naming. He cited information from the reports of several divisions. An expert from the Latin America Division added further comments on the links to cultural heritage in Argentina.

XXIII. Preparation for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

145. The provisional agenda for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (GEGN/23/6) was circulated for information purposes. The Conference has planned to be held in New York from 21 to 30 August 2007. Associated displays and technical meetings would be considered.

146. In introducing working paper No 55, the Chairperson mentioned some of the changes that had been introduced at the present UNGEGN session (for instance, in relation to special presentations and demonstrations, documents posted on the UNGEGN website, etc.). She noted the need to be proactive now if UNGEGN was to recommend changes in the modus operandi of future conferences. Working paper No. 55 opened the discussion on such aspects as the length, emphasis and handling of country reports, divisional meetings, resolutions, etc., and provided a feedback mechanism for the recommendations of experts.

XXIV. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

147. The provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of UNGEGN (annex) was circulated and accepted by experts. The meeting was planned for 20 and 31 August 2007, in conjunction with the Ninth Conference.

XXV. Adoption of the report

148. The draft report of the session as amended during its reading was adopted and would be published as GEGN/23 and GEGN/23/INF.4.

XXVI. Expression of thanks

149. Thanks were expressed to the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons, the Rapporteurs, the Division Chairs and the Working Group Convenors and Rapporteurs, the secretariat and conference services staff for their contribution to the session.

Annex

Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report of the working groups.
4. Reports of liaison officers.
5. Organizational matters concerning the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
6. Review of the statute of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
7. Election of officers.
8. Planning for implementation of the recommendations of the Ninth Conference.
9. Working groups for future requirements.
10. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session.
11. Other business.